

SELECT POEMS

1899

EDITED BY

W. J. ALEXANDER

TORONTO

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SELECT POEMS

BEING THE

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1899.

EDITED WITH

INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND APPENDIX.

BY

W. J. ALEXANDER, PH.D.,

Professor of English in University College, Toronto.

TORONTO:

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INTRODUCTION.

METRE AND ITS RELATION TO THOUGHT.

Metre.—The most easily perceived and most universal characteristic of poetry is its metrical form ; its language is regularly rhythmical. The sense of rhythm is produced by the recurrence of similar conditions at regular intervals of time ; so, breathing, the beating of the heart, the movements of waves, of a vibrating string, of the pendulum, of the feet in dancing, are all rhythmical. It was in association with the last-mentioned species that language itself seems historically to have acquired that regular rhythm which constitutes the poetic form. Music, dancing, and song are, in the earlier stages of race development, always associated. Primitive poetry was song, and consisted of words chanted or sung in unison with rhythmical movements of the body. This original connection of poetry and dancing has left its traces upon some of the technical terms still employed in prosody ; the *foot* contains the syllables originally sung while the foot went through one movement (a *step*, we call it) in the dance ; while the bodily foot was being raised, the unstressed syllables of the metrical foot were sung (hence this part of the metrical foot is called the *arsis*, ‘raising’), and the more vigorous movement of setting down the foot was accompanied by the stressed syllable (the *thesis*, ‘setting down’).* The verse or line (*versus*, ‘a turning’) contains the words sung during the succession of steps made in a forward or backward movement (as in our square dances) until the *turn* is made ; at the turn there is a pause in the dance, as there is at the end of a line in poetry.

The Foot.—The recurring condition spoken of above as one of the factors in rhythm, consists, in the case of poetry, in an arrangement of syllables, which must be similar at recurring intervals, namely, in each foot. The basis of the similarity varies among different races and at different times. In classical Greek and Latin the syllables of successive feet resemble one another in their time relations (*quantity*), e.g., each

* These facts may easily be observed in marching to the *rub-a-dub* of a kettle-drum ; the foot is raised while the drum beats *rub-a*, and set down at the more forcible *dub*.

foot may consist of a short syllable followed by a long, of a long followed by two short, or of some other such arrangement. In the earliest English, again, we have the recurrence of syllables of similar sound (*alliteration*). But in our modern English poetry the basis is *stress*, i.e., energy of utterance.* There are, of course, in the series of syllables contained in a sentence many degrees of stress, but these are not accurately measured by the ear; *two* degrees, however, the ear does easily discriminate, and upon this fact English metre is built. By various combinations of strongly uttered syllables (called *stressed*) with less strongly uttered (called *unstressed*), we get our English feet. So, indicating stressed syllables by the symbol *a*, and unstressed syllables by *x*, we may find a successive *xa*, *xa*, or *ax*, *ax*, or *xxa*, *xxa*, etc. The two former are by far the most common feet, because in our natural utterance alternate syllables are rendered with greater force than the intervening ones; this may be noted in the pronunciation of any polysyllabic word, like 'incompátibility'; in this word the odd syllables are stressed as compared with the even ones, though not all to the same extent.†

The Line.—The sense of rhythm is further intensified in poetry (as in square dances) by superimposing a secondary rhythm upon the primary one; we have not only a recurrence of a regular arrangement of syllables in a foot; but also of feet, in lines. The successive lines are marked off from one another by pauses; but the rhythm is found to be made more palpable and effective by marking the close of the line by some additional peculiarity. So, for example, in the four-foot anapaestic measure so naturally and universally employed for marching, the kettle-drum beats *rub-a-dub*, *rub-a-dub*, *rub-a-dub*, *dub-dub*, that is, *xxa*, *xxa*,

* This is also an important, though not the distinctive factor, in quantitative and alliterative verse, and indeed in all verse, as might be expected from what has been said of the origin of poetry above.

† The iambic or trochaic movement is so much a part of our language that trisyllabic measures are used but rarely, and even when employed a large number of dissyllabic feet invariably occur; for example, in the following stanza from the *Death of Sir John More* (which is anapaestic in its movement), out of fourteen feet, eight are dissyllabic:

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

See also the anapaestic song in *Lady of the Lake*, II, xix.

*ææ, æa.** So in the classical hexameter the last two feet are invariably of the form — 00 | — —, although in any other feet *either* — 00 or — — may be found. But in modern poetry, the device employed for reinforcing the line-rhythm is rhyme. This is the fundamental purpose of rhyme, although, in addition, similarity of sound recurring at regular intervals gives pleasure to the ear.

The Stanza.—Finally, there is another source of rhythmical effect in poetry, the recurrence of a fixed arrangement of lines to which we give the name of *stanza*. So in the following, the ear recognizes that the second stanza is in certain respects a repetition of the first, just as it recognizes that the second line is a repetition of the first :

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear
(Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs and dying gales) :

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-haired Sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed.

But, as a rule in English, the stanza-unit cannot be brought sufficiently into consciousness without the use of rhyme. This formation of stanzas is the third important function of rhyme.

Metrical, as related to Sense, stresses and pauses.—We have then, in poetry, on one side, a series of regular sounds, stresses, and pauses whose object is to produce a sense of rhythm more or less complex, and to give pleasure to the ear ; and this *rhythm* might be made apparent by means of a series of perfectly meaningless sounds like *tra-la*, or *rub-a-dub*. But, on the other side, since poetry must give expression to thought, we have a series of sounds, stresses, and pauses (just as we have in prose) which are necessary to the conveyance of meaning. It is evident that these two series must, in the main, coincide. If they do not, and the passage be read according to the sense, the rhythm will be obliterated and the poetic form absent ; or if the metrical stresses, etc., be observed, words will be disfigured, their connection lost, and the sense be unrecognizable. It is true that this parallelism of the sense-system and the metrical system is more essential in some cases than others. The poet, for example, must not violate the word-pause, *e.g.*,

* The unaccented syllable in this foot has greater length than the previous unaccented syllables.

divide a word between two lines (except to produce a comic effect); but there is considerable latitude in prose, much more in poetry, in the insertion of those pauses which bind words together into phrases. Again, the most emphatic syllable in each word is usually fixed; to give the chief emphasis to another syllable is to mutilate the word. Hence the poet must see that his metre brings the stronger stress upon this syllable; but as between two monosyllabic words, the metrical stress may sometimes fall where the sense stress would not fall.

In short, the poet has no method of imparting rhythm except to arrange his words in such a way that when uttered to express meaning, the required rhythmic movement is given. On the other hand, provided the sense-system and the verse-system in the main coincide, and thus the proper 'tune' is set up, he may trust this 'tune' to carry the reader over places in which the sense rendering would leave the metre doubtful; and even, occasionally, where they are in conflict. For example, in the first line of *Paradise Lost*,

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit

the sense stress in the first, third, and fifth feet is also the stress required by the metre. This is true, likewise, though less manifestly, in the fourth foot; for an independent word, even though as insignificant as "and," possesses naturally greater importance than one of the weaker syllables of a polysyllable. Here, then, the iambic metre is set up in the majority of feet; and this suffices to carry the rhythm through the remaining foot where it is probable, in prose, "first" would be uttered with more energy than "dis." If we turn to Shelley's *Skylark*, we find the line,

With profuse strains of unpremeditated art,

where the word-accent in "profuse" is actually violated by the metre without unpleasing effect; but such instances are rare. In rendering the line, the voice attempts to give both stresses, and the result is not inappropriately called 'hovering accent.' What is true of "profuse" in this case, is true, in general terms, of all correct reading of poetry—the voice gives *both* the sense and the metrical rendering; and, for good poetry, this will be found both possible and pleasing.

It must be noted that in lyrical poetry, with its predominance of emotion and its association with music, the metrical forms differ more markedly from the forms of prose, and the regularities of rhythm are more strictly observed than is the case with other kinds of poetry; the

sense is completely subjected to the form, as is the thought to the emotion. But in narrative poetry, and especially in the drama, the metrical forms are both less striking and less implicitly followed. The very frequent absence of any sense pause at the end of the line, the placing of the strongest pauses in many lines at the caesura, the ending of a line with a syllable comparatively weak as regards sense-stress, the freer transposition of stresses within the foot, and the multiplication or absence of syllables there,—all these peculiarities mark the fact that in the drama poetic form is of less account, and that the music is subordinated to the sense. It is an instructive fact, in this connection, that as Shakespeare's dramatic power grew, the subordination of thought, force, and dramatic truth to poetic beauty, which we find at times in his earlier plays, gradually disappears, until at length the very reverse is true, and beauty and perfection of form are sacrificed to dramatic effectiveness; in other words, smoothness and regularity of metre change to energetic and abrupt expression where rhythm is almost lost.

Variety in Regularity.—In poetry there is a repetition of similarly related syllables at regular intervals; but the relation is only *similar*, not absolutely the same. So in an iambic line the amount of difference between the stress of the two syllables of each foot varies; for example, the difference in stress between “Of” and “man’s” in the first foot of the first line of *Paradise Lost*, is much greater than that between “first” and “dis” of the second foot. The sense for rhythm is sufficiently gratified by the fact that in an iambic line the stress is greater upon the second syllable than upon the first; but the stresses upon all the *x*’s of a line, or upon all the *a*’s, are not, as a rule, exactly equal. If they were, the lines would become intolerably monotonous with their regular see-saw; the variation of stress enables the poet to produce cadences, gradual risings and fallings of stress, such as we also have in the ordinary utterance of any prose sentence; for there are phrase and clause and sentence stresses as well as word stresses. In metre as elsewhere the highest pleasure is given by variety in regularity; the symmetry between two sides of a tree in its natural shape is more pleasing, though less exact, than the symmetry between two sides of a tree artificially clipped; and the symmetry of the two sides of an elm than that of the two sides of a spruce. So the most regular lines are not necessarily the most pleasing to the ear. In metre it is found possible to make still greater departures from uniformity than those indicated: to substitute in certain cases, for example, *xxa*, or even *ax* in the iambic line. The reason why such departures from the norm are

possible, may sometimes be discovered, sometimes not; the cultivated ear is the final court of appeal; variety is permitted, provided the fundamental sense of regularity is not destroyed.

When the regular norm of the verse is most closely adhered to, and when also there is the most perfect correspondence of the metrical system to the sense system, so that not only stress and pause in metre coincide with stress and pause in sense, but the relatively stronger metrical stresses and pauses fall in with the stronger sense stresses and pauses, we have a pleasing sense of smoothness and regularity such as the poetry of Pope gives. Such poetry is not necessarily either better or worse than that more irregular versification which yet sufficiently gratifies the sense of rhythm. Each species is suited to the expression of certain feelings or attitudes of mind. For example, examine the following two passages which exemplify the regular and irregular treatment of the pentameter couplet.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow's in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

—Pope.

We stood
Looking upon the evening, and the flood
Which lay between the city and the shore,
Paved with the image of the sky. The hoar
And airy Alps towards the north appeared
Through mist—an heaven-sustaining bulwark reared
Between the east and west; and half the sky
Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,
Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew
Down the steep west into a wondrous hue
Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent
Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent
Among the many-folded hills. They were
Those famous Euganean hills, which bear,

As seen from Lido through the harbour piles,
 The likeness of a clump of peaked isles.
 And then as if the earth and sea had been
 Dissolved into one lake of fire, were seen
 Those mountains towering, as from waves of flame,
 Around the vaporous sun ; from which there came
 The inmost purple spirit of light, and made
 Their very peaks transparent.

—*Shelley.*

Pope wishes to put each individual thought in a telling way so that it may come home to the reader's intellect,—to excel in terseness and epigrammatic point. Shelley is more under the influence of feeling and mood, and the object of his expression is to kindle this emotional state in his reader. His metrical form is analogous to the instrumental accompaniment of a song ; Pope's to the emphasis and gestures of the orator.

Relation of Metre and Matter in Poetry.—The more or less elaborate metrical devices of poetry combine to give pleasure to the ear independent of the thought conveyed. This pleasure is a more potent factor in the enjoyment of poetry than one might at first be disposed to admit* ; and no great poet has ever been without extraordinary power of imparting this pleasurable rhythm to language. This pleasure is evidently analogous to that given by music, and the ear for poetic, as for musical effects, varies greatly among individuals. The music of songs delights whether we catch the words or not, but enjoyment is greatly enhanced if we follow the sense and are conscious of an adaptation of the music to the thought ; so, in the case of poetry, the metrical flow should in itself gratify the ear, and besides there ought to be perceptible fitness of rhythm to sense.

Now, it is an established fact both that instrumental music stimulates and gives intensity to whatever ideas and emotions the hearer may associate the particular composition being performed, and also that the nature of the emotions and ideas varies, within limits, for different persons. In other words the significance and emotional tendency

* A little observation will serve to reveal the extraordinary natural susceptibility of men to rhythmical effects ; the excitement produced by rhythmical sounds, even when they are not musical on unsophisticated races (Sidney Lanier in his *Science of English Verse* strikingly illustrates this from what he saw among negro slaves) and upon children : the irresistible tendency to group monotonous sounds into rhythms (shown, for example, in the case of the ticking of clocks which we hear as *tick-tack*, though it is really *tick, tick, tick*, etc. ; shown, also, very fully by psychological experiment, cf. *American Journal of Psychology*, vol. 6, No. 2) ; the universal tendency to dancing ; the popular delight in music of which the rhythm is strongly accentuated ; the common inability to listen to such music without in some fashion or other keeping time, etc.

of a given arrangement of musical notes are somewhat vague.* So with poetic forms; yet, although a given rhythm or stanza may have a very wide application, still if a proper poetic form has been chosen for the expression of certain ideas and feeling, this form—its sensuous effect upon the ear—will reinforce the stimulus, the pleasure, the suggestiveness of the thought conveyed. The range of application of a given poetic form is increased by variety of treatment in detail, as is illustrated by the passages quoted above from Pope and Shelley; for all sorts of sound-characters, length of syllables, minor pauses, etc., which are not indicated in the notations of prosody, have their effect on the ear, and cumulatively this effect may be very great. Although the influence of the thought or feeling upon the choice and treatment of poetic form is thus subtle and vague, rather to be felt than to be analyzed, yet some at least of the broader factors in the determination of the form may be pointed out.

Determining factors in the choice of Poetic Lines.—It is manifest that a series of very short lines is likely to produce a monotonous and jerky effect; just as, in prose, short sentences are inferior to long in dignity and in the scope they afford to varied cadence. Long lines would seem, then, in general more suitable than short ones for the poet's purposes. On the other hand there must be a limit to the length of the line; for it is essential that the mind should without effort perceive that the same number of feet recur in successive lines. The eye can perceive at a glance that a series of groups each contain the same number of objects, provided these objects be few; but if each group contained, *e.g.*, twenty-seven objects, the exact equality could only be determined by counting. So it is easy for the ear to perceive the regularity of a series: *rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub, dub-dub*; but if the *rub-a-dub* were repeated, *e.g.*, twelve times before the close of the line the exact equality of such a series would not be forthwith apparent; in other words, the rhythm would not be felt. If the reader will make the experiment of increasing such a line, he will probably find that eight feet is the utmost limit at which the equality of successive lines is accurately perceptible. If a longer series be attempted it will be found to fall into sub-groupings, *e.g.*, of five and four feet, with a pause between them; that is, the series falls into two lines. Hence it is that not only in English, but in other languages with which we are most familiar, poetic lines do not extend beyond eight, usually not beyond

*This is illustrated by some experiments recorded in the *American Journal of Psychology* for the present year.

six or seven feet. It is probable that as we approach the limit of length, there is a liability to confusion ; hence a certain awkwardness about the eight-foot line, very apparent in English in the few examples of this verse. It is the five-foot measure (the pentameter) that is by far the most widely employed in English: *e.g.*, in blank verse, in rhyming couplets, in the elegiac quatrain (as in the *Stanzas on Peele Castle* in this Selection), in the sonnet, in the Spenserian and many other stanzas ; also as the normal foot in the complicated stanzas of odes (as in Wordsworth's *Immortality Ode*, Coleridge's *On the Departing Year*), where the longer and shorter lines are evidently employed for special effects. This wide use indicates a special adaptability in lines of this length. In the first place, they are long enough to have a sonorous and varied cadence, yet are sufficiently far from the limit of length to be easily carried in the mind. They are probably superior to the hexameter as containing an odd number of feet, and hence incapable of falling into the exactly corresponding halves, as the hexameter constantly does.* To *tetrameters* they are manifestly superior in dignity and variety of rhythm. This is, in part, due to the fact that the pentameter is of such a length that there is almost always a fairly strong sense-pause within each line. This pause, which is called the *caesura*, divides each line into two parts of varying length ; and the relation of these parts to one another, as regards the number of syllables and the position of the stresses, gives variety to the line.

These are points which affect the line as a series of mere sounds, that is, are considerations of a metrical and rhythmical character. But sound effects have certain relations to thought. For instance, lines in which trisyllabic feet occur are likely to suggest rapidity and lightness ; for as Dr. Guest says : " As there is always a tendency to dwell on the accented syllable, *cæteris paribus*, a verse will be pronounced the more rapidly, the smaller the number of accents." Compare the two Tennysonian pentameters :

Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn

and

So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

or the absurd combination of mournful sentiments and quick metre in the hymn :

* See, for example, the concluding lines of each of the stanzas of the *Ode to Duty* below ; several, at least, of which might be equally well regarded as two trimeter lines.

My soul is beset
 With grief and dismay ;
 I owe a vast debt
 And nothing can pay.

On the other hand, "as the pronunciation of an accent requires some muscular exertion, a verse is generally the more energetic, the greater the number of its accents." Hence a line both beginning and ending with an accented syllable is suited for the expression of force and activity (see *Boadicea* No. 10 in the Appendix). Such effects and other kindred ones* may be observed in Scott's frequent variations on the normal tetrameter line of eight syllables and four stresses, which is the basis of the verse of the *Lady of the Lake*.

But from the point of view of *thought*, the chief factor in determining the employment of a line must be the relation that exists between metrical units and sense units,—the phrase, the clause, the sentence. What in grammar is called *phrase* scarcely, however, covers that sense-unit which is higher than a word ; in utterance we run together collocations of words which would not in grammar be named phrases : for example, in the following passage such collocations are indicated :—

Still | Wordsworth's use of it | has something unique | and unmatched. | Nature herself | seems, | I say, | to take the pen | out of his hand, | and to write for him | with her own bare, | sheer | penetrating power. | This arises | from two causes : † from the sincereness | with which | Wordsworth feels | his subject, | and also | from the profoundly sincere | and natural character | of the subject itself.—*Arnold*.

Such divisions are doubtless in many cases matters of individual feeling and vary with different readers. The points to be noted, however, are (1) that the voice thus naturally runs words into groups of from one or two to seven or eight syllables, and (2) that the average length of a group is about five syllables. Short lines, therefore, of two or three feet must, as a rule, have to consist each of a phrase, and successive lines of this length must usually contain successive equal phrases. On the other hand, pentameters may conveniently contain two phrases of varying lengths giving rise to varying positions of the caesura, and are, further, sufficiently long to admit an average clause.† Light is thrown upon the relative advantages of pentameter and hexameter, by Scott's plea for

* See Guest's *History of English Rhythms*, pp. 162-168.

† This is well illustrated in the smooth couplets of 18th century writers ; see for example the extracts from Johnson in the Appendix, Nos. 4 and 5, Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, Pope's works, etc.

the latter, even although his general contention cannot be admitted. In a letter to a friend who urged him to adopt the pentameter couplet (heroic verse), he writes :—

“I am still inclined to defend the eight-syllable stanza, which I have somehow persuaded myself is more congenial to the English language—more favourable to narrative poetry at least—than that which has been commonly termed heroic verse. If you will take the trouble to read a page of Pope’s *Iliad*, you will find probably a good many lines out of which two syllables may be struck without injury to the sense. The first lines of this translation have been repeatedly noticed as capable of being cut down from ships of the line to frigates, by striking out the said two syllabled words, as :

‘Achilles wrath, to Greece, the *direful* spring
Of woes unnumbered, *heavenly* goddess sing.
That wrath which sent to Pluto’s *gloomy* reign
The souls of *mighty* chiefs in battle slain,
Whose bones unburied on the *desert* shore
Devouring dogs and *hungry* vulture’s tore.’

Now since it is true by throwing out the epithets underscored, we preserve the sense without diminishing the force of the verse, I do really think that the structure of verse which requires least of this sort of bolstering, is most likely to be forcible and animated. The case is different in descriptive poetry, because these epithets, if they are happily selected, are rather to be sought than avoided, and admit of being varied *ad infinitum*. . . . Besides, the eight-syllable stanza is capable of certain varieties denied to the heroic. Double rhymes, for instance, are congenial to it, which often give a sort of Gothic richness to its cadences ; you may also render it more or less rapid by retaining or dropping an occasional syllable. Lastly, and which I think its principal merit, it runs better into sentences than any length of line I know, as it corresponds, upon an average view of our punctuation, very commonly with the proper and usual space between comma and comma.”

One thing, at least, is certain, if the omissions which Scott suggests, be made in Pope’s lines, they lose their impressive cadence ; it may also be true that there is, in the pentameter, a certain roominess which, as Scott maintains, allows additions not absolutely needful to the sense ; but, then, most poetry elaborates and ornaments, and it is perhaps just because Scott’s poems depend mainly on the swift flow of events and changeful scenes, on the effectiveness of whole pictures and passages, rather than upon beauty and exquisiteness in detail, that Scott finds the terse tetrameter couplet congenial to him. Further, the undoubted variety and even license which, through the practice of unsophisticated ballad-makers, became associated with this metre, were in keeping with Scott’s temperament and art ; whereas the heroic couplet was, especially at that era, characterized by the minute workmanship and elaborate regularity imparted to it by the poets of the 18th century ; hence, in the form in which Scott was familiar with it, little suited to his genius.

The Stanza in its Relation to Thought.—The use of rhyme inevitably gives rise to stanzas; for thereby two lines, at least, are linked together, and form a metrical unit larger than the line; as the line is a metrical unit larger than the foot. The simplest stanzas consist of two similar lines; starting thence, we find varied degrees of length and complexity, only limited by the mind's capacity for remembering rhymes and easily grasping a complex as a whole. In general it is true, that the longer and more complex the stanza, the more special is the character of its 'tune,' and hence the narrower its sphere of employment. Hence it is that for long narrative poems, like *The Lady of the Lake*, which necessarily deal with a variety of subjects and stimulate a variety of feelings, a simple and flexible form—usually the couplet or blank verse—is employed.* On the other hand, elaborate stanzas with their more pronounced metrical effect are best suited to shorter poems, or to poems like *In Memoriam* with one dominating note. No one, for instance, can fail to feel the pronounced character of elegiac verse (employed for example in the *Stanzas on Peele Castle*) with its slow and dignified cadence, plainly unsuitable for a long and varied narrative.† Exceptionally however, stanzas of elaborate structure are successfully employed in extensive poems, notably the Spenserian stanza (in Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, Byron's *Childe Harold*, Keats' *St. Agnes' Eve*, etc.), and the octave rhyme (in Byron's *Don Juan*, Keats' *Isabella*, etc.). The former stanza (of which we have an example in the preludes to the cantos of *The Lady of the Lake*) has the advantage of being long enough to adapt itself to the paragraph. It lends itself to the purposes of the three poets named because, while the poems mentioned are narratives, their excellence lies not in narration but leisurely description, and the roomy stanzas allow the needful accumulation of detail, and often form a series of pictures each, as it were, in its own frame.‡ The organic nature of poetic form is strikingly illustrated by the selection, for their romantic stories, of the most elaborate and of the most simple narrative stanzas by Spenser and Scott respectively; Spenser with his instinct for beauty,

* Note for example the contrast in effect between the rhyming couplets with which the battle of Beal' an Duine opens (*Lady of the Lake*, VI, xvi), and the quatrains which follow (l. 375) with their markedly lyrical tone.

† This is strikingly illustrated in Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, where a great master of versification is evidently hampered by the use of this form for narrative purposes; Scott in his edition of Dryden points out in detail how the long stanza forces the poet into "padding."

‡ See Corson's *Primer of English Verse*, pp. 100-106.

repose and grace, his sensuous and meditative nature, finds a fit instrument in the former; Scott with his comparative insensibility to the more subtle aspects of the beautiful, his vigour, his love for activity and movement, is drawn to the terser, swifter, and simpler form.

In examining the emotional influence of stanzas, the effects of different combinations of rhymes, of double rhymes, of varying the lengths of lines as well as of the movement of the line (iambic, anapaestic, etc.) should all be considered. For example, when more than two lines rhyme together in succession, a sense of sustained feeling or thought is produced; when this is broken at intervals by shorter lines, a panting movement is the result well fitted for the expression of the throbs of intense feeling. (See, for example, the imprecation of Brian, *Lady of the Lake*, III, ix and x, and Norman's song in xxiii of same Canto). The close of a line, we observed, is often marked by some special peculiarity in addition to the pause; in like manner the more prolonged pause at the end of a stanza is reinforced by some device, such as the use of a longer line (as in the Spenserian stanza or in the *Ode to Duty*), by a shorter line (as in *To My Sister*), or a rhyming couplet (as in *The Solitary Reaper* and *To the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth*). In the case of a shorter line rhyming with a longer one, the mind involuntarily fills up the lacking beats, and the sense of pause is strongly intensified.*

At the opposite pole to the elaborate stanzas of which we have spoken, stands pentameter blank verse, where there is neither rhyme nor stanza; hence come a freedom and scope which fit it for use in epic and other long narrative poems, and especially for the drama, where change of mood and sentiment are continual. On the one side, through absence of rhyme and consequent weakening of separation between line and line, blank verse may be made to approximate to prose (as may be noted in certain parts of *Michael*); on the other, with skilful handling it is capable of extraordinarily beautiful and varied rhythmic effects, especially exemplified in *Paradise Lost*. But on account of the absence of the charm of rhyme, and of the guidance afforded by the more stringent rules of the stanza, no measure is so difficult to use effectively.†

The Sonnet.—In the stanza we have a form which the poet may repeat indefinitely, but there also exist forms for a whole poem; thus the

* Tennyson's *Palace of Art* strikingly illustrates this.

† For an investigation into the factors of effectiveness in this form, see the writer's article on *Blank Verse* in the Proceedings of the Ontario Educational Association.

thought is limited not only to a certain kind and arrangement, but also to a fixed number, of lines. Such restrictions are so burdensome that substance and sincerity are likely to be sacrificed by the poet, and the attention of the reader to be distracted from the weighty matters of thought and feeling to mere technical ingenuity. In English, at least, such forms—Rondeau, Triolet, etc.—are but little used and are likely to degenerate into mere poetical toys. There is one exception, however; the *Sonnet* has been widely employed with great success by some of our greatest poets. Some fine exemplars of it are to be found among the following Selections, and it will be proper to state its structure somewhat in detail.

The Sonnet is a poem consisting of fourteen pentameter lines, and these lines are, by means of rhyme, combined in a certain fixed way. The first four lines form a quatrain (*i.e.*, a four-lined stanza), with the first and last lines rhyming, and also the second and third. The next four lines also form a quatrain of exactly the same structure; and these two quatrains are united by having common rhymes. The rhyme-scheme may therefore be represented as a b b a a b b a.* The eight lines being thus linked together are felt as a whole, and are called the *octave*. The remaining six lines, in a regular sonnet, are not connected by rhyme with the octave, but rhyme together in such a way as also to be felt as belonging to one another; they are called the *sestette*. The sestette contains three, or two, different rhymes; the arrangement of the rhymes is left very free, provided only the result be that the sestette is felt as forming a metrical whole. So, for example, with two rhymes a common arrangement is d e d e d e; or with three rhymes d e f d e f; but the arrangement d e d e f f is not held to be a good one in the regular sonnet; because the final couplet is naturally felt as standing apart from the rest, and the sonnet loses its characteristic effect. In the regular form here described a great many beautiful poems have been written, not merely in English, but in other European languages, especially in Italian, where the sonnet originated.

The sonnet, from the point of view of form, is, as compared with other poems, markedly a whole made up of parts. It has shape, as a Greek pillar, with its base shaft and capital, has shape. There is no reason in *form* why a poem written in couplets or stanzas should not

*English poets take great liberties with the form, and in some sonnets the arrangement of rhymes is different; but the order given above is the accepted one, and is also the most usual and, other things being equal, the most effective.

end at any stanza, at the twelfth line, for example, rather than the sixteenth. In form, it is a mere repetition of similar parts; and, accordingly, it often happens that lyrics written in quatrains have no particular beginning or end; the poet keeps circling around some central feeling or thought, there is no marked development. On the contrary, the form of the sonnet, as well as its music with the flow and ebb, manifestly lends itself to developed thought—to the expression of ideas which start somewhere and end in some conclusion. Such thought is, other things being equal, more interesting and artistic, than thought which makes no progress; just as a story with developed plot is more artistic and interesting than a series of loosely connected scenes. The sonnet therefore is, by its form, suited to the expression of some poetic conception which can be briefly expressed and yet is progressive,—has unity, and development, a beginning, middle, and conclusion. As the form falls into two parts, so also will the thought. The octave will contain the introduction, the circumstances, etc., which give rise to, or serve to explain, the main idea or feeling. The sestet will give expression to this main idea; and the character of the thought of the concluding lines of the sestet will be such as to indicate that the poem is closing. As the octave consists of two parts, so often will the thought of the introduction divide itself into two parts or stages. Again, the reader cannot but feel that the form of the sonnet is very elaborate, and somewhat rigid. So a sonnet is not fitted to express a strong gush of emotion, or intensity of feeling—such as we often find in the ordinary lyric. Burns' songs forced into sonnet-form would quite lose their characteristic flavour of spontaneity, passion, or humour. In the sonnet, too, the movements of line and stanza are slow and dignified. Hence the sonnet is specially adapted to the expression of thoughtful, meditative moods. "When an emotion," says Theodore Watts, very admirably, "is either too deeply charged with thought, or too much adulterated with fancy, to pass spontaneously into the movements of a pure lyric" it is appropriately "embodied in the single metrical flow and return" of a sonnet. As the form of this species of poem compels brevity and suggests premeditation and effort; so we expect weight and condensation of thought, and exquisiteness of diction. And as it is a developed whole and, like a tragedy, has a certain culmination, we expect this condensation and weight and this perfection of workmanship, more especially in the sestet. If, on the other hand, there is no correspondence between thought and form in the sonnet, no appropriateness in the music, the whole thing seems a useless piece of artificiality, little more interesting than an acrostic.

We have given the broad principles of sonnet construction as borrowed from the Italian; but English writers, as already indicated, have treated the form at times very freely, and departed even from these more general rules. One variant developed by Elizabethan writers and adopted by Shakespeare, is so marked a deviation from the original as almost to constitute a different species of poem. Its structure is simple; it consists of three quatrains, each consisting of lines rhyming alternately, followed by a couplet. The rhyme scheme is, therefore, a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, g g. Looking at the form of this poem, one might either say it consisted either of four, or of two, parts. In practice, the difference between the three quatrains on the one hand, and the couplet on the other is so conspicuous that the poem seems naturally to fall rather into these two parts. The first twelve lines are introductory; within these twelve lines the thought may or may not be progressive; the last two lines contain the gist of the thought, the application or outcome of what has been given in the quatrains; they have the effect of climax or epigram. It very often happens, however, that the first eight lines are introductory, as in the regular sonnet; the next four develop the thought towards the conclusion; while the couplet drops in the keystone, as it were, which completes and holds together the whole. Regular sonnets have been compared, in their movement, to the rise and fall of a billow, to "a rocket ascending in the air, breaking into light, and falling in a soft shower of brightness." The Shakespearian sonnet, on the other hand, has been likened to a "red-hot bar being moulded upon a forge till—in the closing couplet—it receives the final clinching blow from a heavy hammer."*

* The following books may be mentioned as among the most useful on the subject of English metre: Guest's *History of English Rhythms*, Schipper's *Englische Metrik* (two extensive and scholarly works, the latter in German), Mayor's *English Metre*, Corson's *Primer of English Verse*, Lanier's *Science of English Verse*.

SCOTT.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIRST.

The Chase.

Harp of the North ! that mouldering long hast hung

On the witch-elm that shades St. Fillan's spring,

And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,

Till envious ivy did around thee cling,

Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,— 5

O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep ?

Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,

Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,

Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep ?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, 10

Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,

When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,

Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.

At each according pause, was heard aloud

Thine ardent symphony sublime and high ! 15

Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd ;

For still the burden of thy minstrelsy

Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless
eye.

O wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand

That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ; 20

O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :

Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
 And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
 Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway, 25
 The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
 Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !

I.

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
 Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
 And deep his midnight lair had made 30
 In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;
 But, when the sun his beacon red
 Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
 The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
 Resounded up the rocky way, 35
 And faint, from farther distance borne,
 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II.

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
 "To arms ! the foemen storm the wall,"
 The antler'd monarch of the waste 40
 Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
 But, ere his fleet career he took,
 The dew-drops from his flanks he shook ;
 Like crested leader proud and high,
 Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky ; 45
 A moment gazed adown the dale,
 A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
 A moment listen'd to the cry,
 That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh ;
 Then, as the headmost foes appear'd, 50
 With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
 And, stretching forward free and far,
 Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III.

Yell'd on the view the opening pack ;
Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them back ; 55
To many a mingled sound at once
The awaken'd mountain gave response.
A hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out, 60
A hundred voices join'd the shout ;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the doe, 65
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din 70
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still.
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of silvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var, 75
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old ;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce, 80
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,

Scarce half the lessening pack was near ;
 So shrewdly on the mountain side,
 Had the bold burst their mettle tried. 85

V.

The noble stag was pausing now
 Upon the mountain's southern brow,
 Where broad extended, far beneath,
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.
 With anxious eye he wander'd o'er 90
 Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
 And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
 But nearer was the copsewood grey,
 That waved and wept on Loch-Achray, 95
 And mingled with the pine-trees blue
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
 Fresh vigour with the hope return'd,
 With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
 Held westward with unwearied race, 100
 And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'T were long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through Cambus-more ;
 What reins were tighten'd in despair,
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air ; 105
 Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
 Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,—
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
 Few were the stragglers, following far, 110
 That reach'd the lake of Vennachar ;
 And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
 The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
 That horseman plied the scourge and steel : 115
 For jaded now, and spent with toil,
 Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,
 While every gasp with sobs he drew,
 The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
 Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed, 120
 Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
 Fast on his flying traces came,
 And all but won that desperate game :
 For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
 Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds stanch ; 125
 Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
 Nor farther might the quarry strain.
 Thus up the margin of the lake,
 Between the precipice and brake.
 O'er stock and rock their race they take. 130

VIII.

The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,
 The lone lake's western boundary,
 And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
 Where that huge rampart barr'd the way ; 135
 Already glorying in the prize,
 Measured his antlers with his eyes ;
 For the death-wound and death-halloo,
 Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew ;—
 But thundering as he came prepared, 140
 With ready arm and weapon bared,
 The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
 And turn'd him from the opposing rock :
 Then, dashing down a darksome glen,

Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook 145
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain, 150
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanish'd game ;
But, stumbling on the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell. 155
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more ;
Then, touch'd with pity and remorse, 160
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
" I little thought, when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed ! 165
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey ! "

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds,
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace, 170
The sulky leaders of the chase ;
Close to their master's side they press'd,
With drooping tail and humbled crest ;

But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note. 175
The owlets started from their dream.
The eagles answer'd with their scream.
Round and around the sounds were cast
Till echo seem'd an answering blast ;
And on the Hunter hied his way, 180
To join some comrades of the day ;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way ; 185
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid, 190
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass, 195
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set 200
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,

Nor lack'd they many a banner fair ; 205
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen.
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes, 210
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there ; 215
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cleft a narrow bower ;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain 220
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath ;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock ; 225
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced, 230
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream. 235



Ellen's Isle, Loch Katrine.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering, 240
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace ;
And farther as the Hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made. 245
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat ;
Yet broader floods extending still 250
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken, 255
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid ;
And thus an airy point he won, 260
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay, 265

And islands that, empurpled bright,
 Floated amid the livelier light,
 And mountains, that like giants stand,
 To sentinel enchanted land.
 High on the south, huge Benvenue 270
 Down to the lake in masses threw
 Cragg, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
 The fragments of an earlier world ;
 A wildering forest feather'd o'er
 His ruin'd sides and summit hoar, 275
 While on the north, through middle air,
 Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
 The stranger, raptured and amazed,
 And, "What a scene were here," he cried, 280
 "For princely pomp, or churchman's pride !
 On this bold brow, a lordly tower ;
 In that soft vale, a lady's bower ;
 On yonder meadow, far away,
 The turrets of a cloister gray ; 285
 How blithely might the bugle-horn
 Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn !
 How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
 Chime, when the groves were still and mute !
 And, when the midnight moon should lave 290
 Her forehead in the silver wave,
 How solemn on the ear would come
 The holy matins' distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone, 295
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 To drop a bead with every knell—

And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewilder'd stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall. 300

XVI.

“Blithe were it then to wander here !
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare ;
Some mossy bank my couch must be, 305
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that ; the war and chase
Give little choice of resting place :—
A summer night, in greenwood spent,
Were but to-morrow's merriment : 310
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better miss'd than found ;
To meet with Highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone :—my bugle strain 315
May call some straggler of the train ;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried.”

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo ! forth starting at the sound, 320
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep 325
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,

Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow twig to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow. 330
 The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,
 And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again 335
 She thought to catch the distant strain.
 With head up-raised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art, 340
 In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
 A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
 Of finer form, or lovelier face ! 345
 What though the sun, with ardent frown,
 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
 The sportive toil, which, short and light,
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
 Served too in hastier swell to show 350
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow :
 What though no rule of courtly grace
 To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
 A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew ; 355
 E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
 Elastic from her airy tread :

What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear, 360
The list'ner held his breath to hear !

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid ;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch such birth betray'd. 365
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing ;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care, 370
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye ;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue, 375
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast ;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh, 380
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unreveal'd, 385
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,
Yet not less purely felt the flame ;—
O ! need I tell that passion's name !

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
 Now on the gale her voice was borne :— 390
 “ Father ! ” she cried ; the rocks around
 Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
 A while she paused, no answer came,—
 “ Malcolm, was thine the blast ? ” the name
 Less resolutely utter’d fell, 395
 The echoes could not catch the swell.
 “ A stranger I,” the Huntsman said,
 Advancing from the hazel shade.
 The maid, alarm’d, with hasty oar,
 Push’d her light shallop from the shore, 400
 And when a space was gain’d between,
 Closer she drew her bosom’s screen ;
 (So forth the startled swan would swing,
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing).
 Then safe, though flutter’d and amazed, 405
 She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,
 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
 Had slightly press’d its signet sage, 410
 Yet had not quench’d the open truth
 And fiery vehemence of youth ;
 Forward and frolic glee was there,
 The will to do, the soul to dare,
 The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire, 415
 Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
 His limbs were cast in manly mould,
 For hardy sports or contest bold ;

And though in peaceful garb array'd,
And weaponless, except his blade, 420
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a Baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trode the shore.
Slighting the petty need he show'd, 425
He told of his benighted road ;
His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy ;
Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command. 430

XXII.

A while the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That Highland halls were open still
To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
"Nor think you unexpected come 435
To yon lone isle, our desert home ;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pull'd for you,
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled, 440
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has err'd," he said ;
"No right have I to claim, misplaced, 445
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,

Have ever drawn your mountain air, 450
 Till on this lake's romantic strand,
 I found a fay in fairy land !"—

XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approach'd the side,—
 "I well believe, that ne'er before 455
 Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore ;
 But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
 A grey-hair'd sire, whose eye intent
 Was on the vision'd future bent. 460
 He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
 Lie dead beneath the birchen way ;
 Painted exact your form and mien,
 Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt, 465
 That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
 That cap with heron plumage trim,
 And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
 He bade that all should ready be,
 To grace a guest of fair degree ; 470
 But light I held his prophecy,
 And deem'd it was my father's horn,
 Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV.

The stranger smiled : - "Since to your home
 A destined errant-knight I come, 475
 Announced by prophet sooth and old,
 Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
 I'll lightly front each high emprise,

For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
 Permit me, first, the task to guide 480
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
 The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,
 The toil unwonted saw him try ;
 For seldom sure, if e'er before,
 His noble hand had grasp'd an oar : 485
 Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
 And o'er the lake the shallop flew ;
 With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
 The hounds behind their passage ply.
 Nor frequent does the bright oar break 490
 The darkening mirror of the lake,
 Until the rocky isle they reach,
 And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The stranger view'd the shore around ;
 'Twas all so close with copsewood bound, 495
 Nor track nor pathway might declare
 That human foot frequented there,
 Until the mountain-maiden show'd
 A clambering unsuspected road,
 That winded through the tangled screen, 500
 And open'd on a narrow green,
 Where weeping birch and willow round
 With their long fibres swept the ground.
 Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
 Some chief had framed a rustic bower. 505

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
 But strange of structure and device ;
 Of such materials, as around

The workman's hand had readiest found.
 Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks
 bared, 510
 And by the hatchet rudely squared,
 To give the walls their destined height.
 The sturdy oak and ash unite ;
 While moss and clay and leaves combined
 To fence each crevice from the wind. 515
 The lighter pine-trees, overhead,
 Their slender length for rafters spread,
 And wither'd heath and rushes dry
 Supplied a russet canopy.
 Due westward, fronting to the green, 520
 A rural portico was seen,
 Aloft on native pillars borne,
 Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
 Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
 The ivy and Idæan vine, 525
 The clematis, the favour'd flower
 Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
 And every hardy plant could bear
 Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
 An instant in this porch she staid, 530
 And gaily to the stranger said,
 "On heaven and on thy lady call,
 And enter the enchanted hall !"

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
 My gentle guide, in following thee."— 535
 He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
 Of angry steel that instant rang.
 To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
 But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,

When on the floor he saw display'd, 540
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung :
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase : 545
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died, 550
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns ;
Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
That blackening streaks of blood retain'd, 555
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the silvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed, 560
And next the fallen weapon raised :—
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
“ I never knew but one,” he said, 565
“ Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle-field.”
She sighed, then smiled and took the word ;
“ You see the guardian champion's sword :
As light it trembles in his hand, 570
As in my grasp a hazel wand ;

My sire's tall form might grace the part
 Of Ferragus, or Ascabart ;
 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials old." 575

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,
 Mature of age, a graceful dame ;
 Whose easy step and stately port
 Had well become a princely court,
 To whom, though more than kindred knew, 580
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
 Meet welcome to her guest she made,
 And every courteous rite was paid,
 That hospitality could claim,
 Though all unask'd his birth and name. 585
 Such then the reverence to a guest,
 That fellest foe might join the feast,
 And from his deadliest foeman's door
 Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
 At length his rank the stranger names, 590
 "The Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James
 Lord of a barren heritage,
 Which his brave sires, from age to age,
 By their good swords had held with toil ;
 His sire had fall'n in such turmoil, 595
 And he, God wot, was forced to stand
 Oft for his right with blade in hand.
 This morning with Lord Moray's train
 He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
 Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer, 600
 Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn require
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.
 Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
 That courts and cities she had seen ; 605
 Ellen, though more her looks display'd
 The simple grace of silvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Show'd she was come of gentle race.
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find 610
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdown gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave ;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turn'd all inquiry light away :— 615
 “ Weird women we ! by dale and down
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spells we cast ;
 While viewless minstrels touch the string, 620
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing.”
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Fill'd up the symphony between.

XXXI.

Song.

“ Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking : 625
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,

Fairy strains of music fall, 630
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting-fields no more :
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking. 635

“No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armour’s clang, or war-steed champing,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
 Yet the lark’s shrill fife may come 640
 At the day-break from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 Booming from the sedgy shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here, 645
 Here’s no war-steed’s neigh and champing,
 Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.”

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
 To grace the stranger of the day.
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong 650
 The cadence of the flowing song,
 Till to her lips in measured frame
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came

Song continued.

“Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done,
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye, 655
 Dream not, with the rising sun,
 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
 Sleep ! the deer is in his den ;

Sleep ! thy hounds are by thee lying ;
Sleep ! nor dream in yonder glen, 660
How thy gallant steed lay dying:
Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillé." 665

XXXIII.

The hall was cleared—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
And dream'd their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed 670
Its moorland fragrance round his head ;
Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes : 675
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake ;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then,—from my couch may heavenly might 680
Chase that worst phantom of the night !—
Again return'd the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth :
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged. 685
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead :
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view— 690

O were his senses false or true?
 Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
 Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
 He seem'd to walk, and speak of love ; 695
 She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
 His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
 He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
 And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :
 The phantom's sex was changed and gone, 700
 Upon its head a helmet shone ;
 Slowly enlarged to giant size,
 With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
 The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
 To Ellen still a likeness bore.— 705
 He woke, and, panting with affright,
 Recall'd the vision of the night.
 The hearth's decaying brands were red,
 And deep and dusky lustre shed,
 Half showing, half concealing, all 710
 The uncouth trophies of the hall.
 Mid those the stranger fix'd his eye
 Where that huge falchion hung on high,
 And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
 Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along, 715
 Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
 He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
 Wasted around their rich perfume :
 The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm, 720

The aspens slept beneath the calm ;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray ! 725
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast :—
“ Why is it at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race ?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy, 730
But she must bear the Douglas eye ?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand ?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme ? 735
I'll dream no more,—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more.”
His midnight orisons he told, 740
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose ;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue. 745

CANTO SECOND.

The Island.

I.

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
 'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring
 Of life reviving, with reviving day ;
 And while yon little bark glides down the bay, 5
 Wafting the stranger on his way again,
 Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,
 And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
 Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd Allan-bane !

II.

Song.

"Not faster yonder rowers' might 10
 Flings from their oars the spray,
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,
 That tracks the shallop's course in light,
 Melts in the lake away,
 Than men from memory erase 15
 The benefits of former days ;
 Then, stranger, go ! good speed the while,
 Nor think again of the lonely isle.

"High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battle line, 20
 Good hawk and hound for silvan sport !
 Where beauty sees the brave resort,
 The honour'd meed be thine !
 True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,

Thy lady constant, kind, and dear, 25
And lost in love's and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

Song continued.

“But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh, 30
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his Highland home ;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe ;
Remember then thy hap ere while, 35
A stranger in the lonely isle.

“Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail ;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain 40
Beneath the fickle gale ;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.” 45

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reach'd the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach 50
The Harper on the islet beach,

Reclined against a blighted tree,
 As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
 To minstrel meditation given,
 His reverend brow was raised to heaven, 55
 As from the rising sun to claim
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seem'd watching the awakening fire ;
 So still he sate, as those who wait 60
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate ;
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair ;
 So still, as life itself were fled
 In the last sound his harp had sped. 65

v.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach, 70
 Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach ?
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
 Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose ?—
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity !
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see 75
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
 And stop and turn to wave anew ;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy, 80
 And prize such conquest of her eye ?

VI.

While yet he loiter'd on the spot, ·
It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not ;
But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made ; 85
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell, 90
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts,—the maid, unconscious still,
Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill ; 95
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian of her bosom chid,—
“Thy Malcolm ! vain and selfish maid !”
’Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,—
“Not so had Malcolm idly hung 100
On the smooth phrase of southern tongue ;
Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye,
Another step than thine to spy.—
Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried
To the old Minstrel by her side,— 105
“Arouse thee from thy moody dream !
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name ;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme !”
Scarce from her lips the word had rush'd, 110
When deep the conscious maiden blush'd ;
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII.

The minstrel waked his harp,—three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes, 115
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
“Vainly thou bid’st, O noble maid,”
Clasping his wither’d hands, he said,
“Vainly thou bid’st me wake the strain 120
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas ! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann’d !
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe ; 125
And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge’s deep prophetic tone !
If, as my tuneful fathers said, 130
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,
Can thus its master’s fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel’s knell !

VIII.

“But ah ! dear lady, thus it sigh’d,
The eve thy sainted mother died ; 135
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call, 140
Wail’d loud through Bothwell’s banner’d hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—

Oh ! if yet worse mishap and woe,
My master's house must undergo, 145
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp ! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string ;
One short, one final strain shall flow, 150
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die ! ”

IX.

Soothing she answer'd him—“ Assuage,
Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age ; 155
All melodies to thee are known
That harp has rung or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise, 160
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song ?—
Small ground is now for boding fear ;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here. 165
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resign'd,
Than yonder oak might give the wind ;
The graceful foliage storms may reave, 170
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,”—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
“ For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days, 175

This little flower, that loves the lea,
 May well my simple emblem be ;
 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
 That in the King's own garden grows ;
 And when I place it in my hair, 180
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway, 185
 Wiled the old Harper's mood away.
 With such a look as hermits throw,
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrill'd to a tear, then thus replied : 190
 " Loveliest and best ! thou little know'st
 The rank, the honours, thou hast lost !
 O might I live to see thee grace,
 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
 To see my favourite's step advance, 195
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eye,
 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart !"— 200

XI.

" Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
 (Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd ;)

" Yet is this mossy rock to me
 Worth splendid chair and canopy ;

Nor would my footsteps spring more gay 205
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 To bend before my conquering eye,— 210
 Thou, flattering bard ! thyself wilt say,
 That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
 Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay 215
 A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII.

The ancient bard her glee repress'd :
 " Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest !
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled ! 220
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew ;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide ;
 And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand 225
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dare give—ah ! woe the day
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer, 230
 Even the rude refuge we have here ?
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand ; 235

Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
 Then, though an exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear ; 240
 And though to Roderick thou 'rt so dear,
 That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread :
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain !
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane."— 245

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
 "My debts to Roderick's house I know :
 All that a mother could bestow,
 To Lady Margaret's care I owe, 250
 Since first an orphan in the wild
 She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child ;
 To her brave chieftain son, from ire
 Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
 A deeper, holier debt is owed ; 255
 And, could I pay it with my blood,
 Allan ! Sir Roderick should command
 My blood, my life—but not my hand.
 Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
 A votaress in Maronnan's cell : 260
 Rather through realms beyond the sea,
 Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
 An outcast pilgrim will she rove, 265
 Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

“Thou shak'st, good friend, thy tresses grey,—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own !—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave : 270
And generous,—save vindictive mood,
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood :
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand ;
But O ! that very blade of steel 275
More mercy for a foe would feel :
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind, 280
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought ;
But can I clasp it reeking red, 285
From peasants slaughter'd in their shed ?
No ! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky. 290
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume ;
A maiden gown, I ill could bear 295
His haughty mien and lordly air :
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,

I thrill with anguish ! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear. 300
 To change such odious theme were best,
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest !"—

xv.

"What think I of him ?—woe the while
 That brought such wanderer to our isle !
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore 305
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe. 310
 If courtly spy hath harbour'd here,
 What may we for the Douglas fear ?
 What for this island, deem'd of old
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold ?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray 315
 What yet may jealous Roderick say ?
 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,
 Bethink thee of the discord dread,
 That kindled when at Beltane game
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme : 320
 Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud ;
 Beware !—But hark, what sounds are these ?
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
 No weeping birch, nor aspens wake, 325
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
 Still is the canna's hoary beard,
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
 And hark again ! some pipe of war
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar." 330

XVI.

Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle, 335
Steer'd full upon the lonely isle ;
The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine. 340
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave :
Now see the bonnets sink and rise, 345
As his tough oar the rower plies ;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke ;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow 350
From their loud chanters down, and sweep
The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud 355
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sounds, by distance tame,
Mellow'd along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wail'd every harsher note away, 360

'Then bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear ;
 Those thrilling sounds that call the might
 Of Old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
 'Thick beat the rapid notes, as when 365
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
 And hurrying at the signal dread,
 The batter'd earth returns their tread.
 'Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
 Express'd their merry marching on, 370
 Ere peal of closing battle rose,
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows ;
 And mimic din of stroke and ward,
 As broadsword upon target jarr'd ;
 And groaning pause, ere yet again, 375
 Condensed, the battle yell'd amain ;
 The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
 Retreat borne headlong into rout,
 And bursts of triumph, to declare
 Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there. 380
 Nor ended thus the strain ; but slow
 Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
 And changed the conquering clarion swell,
 For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased ; but lake and hill 385
 Were busy with their echoes still ;
 And, when they slept, a vocal strain
 Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
 While loud a hundred clansmen raise
 Their voices in their Chieftain's praise. 390
 Each boatman, bending to his oar,

With measured sweep the burden bore,
 In such wild cadence as the breeze
 Makes through December's leafless trees.
 The chorus first could Allan know, 395
 "Roderick Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"
 And near, and nearer as they row'd,
 Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

XIX.

Goat Song.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances !
 Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine ! 400
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line !
 Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gaily to bourgeon, and broadly to grow, 405
 While every Highland glen
 Sends our shout back again,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade ; 410
 When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the
 mountain,
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
 Moor'd in the rifted rock,
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow ; 415
 Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his praise again,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied ; 420
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.
 Widow and Saxon maid
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe ; 425
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear again,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands !
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine ! 430
 O, that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine !
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthy such noble stem,
 Honour'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow !
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then 436
 Ring from her deepmost glen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
 Had Lady Margaret sought the strand. 440
 Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
 And high their snowy arms they threw,
 As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
 And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name ;
 While prompt to please, with mother's art, 445
 The darling passion of his heart,
 The Dame called Ellen to the strand,

To greet her kinsman ere he land :
“Come, loiterer, come ! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor’s brow !”— 450
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obey’d,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung :—
“List, Allan-bane ! From mainland cast 455
I hear my father’s signal blast.
Be ours,” she cried, “the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain-side.”
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light, 460
And, eagerly while Roderick scann’d,
For her dear form, his mother’s band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given, 465
With less of earth in them than heaven :
And if there be a human tear
From passion’s dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel’s cheek, 470
’Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter’s head !
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely press’d,
Such holy drops her tresses steep’d, 475
Though ’twas an hero’s eye that weep’d.
Nor while on Ellen’s faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Mark’d she, that fear (affection’s proof)

Still held a graceful youth aloof ; 480
 No ! not till Douglas named his name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm Græne.

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
 Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle ;
 His master piteously he eyed, 485
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
 Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
 From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray ;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said, 490
 " Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye ?
 I'll tell thee :—he recalls the day,
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud, 495
 While many a minstrel answer'd loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim, 500
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
 Though the waned crescent own'd my might,
 And in my train troop'd lord and knight, 505
 Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome give more kind and true, 510

Than ought my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows, 515
The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid 520
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly. 525
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweigh'd her worth, and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail 530
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature tall, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme. 535
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.

Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye 540
 The ptarmigan in snow could spy :
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
 He knew, through Lennox and Menteith ;
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow, 545
 And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
 Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer :
 Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
 And not a sob his toil confess.
 His form accorded with a mind 550
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind ;
 A blither heart, till Ellen came,
 Did never love nor sorrow tame ;
 It danced as lightsome in his breast,
 As play'd the feather on his crest. 555
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
 And bards, who saw his features bold,
 When kindled by the tales of old,
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown, 560
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
 But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,
 And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say, 565
 "Why urge thy chase so far astray?
 And why so late return'd? And why"—
 The rest was in her speaking eye.
 "My child, the chase I follow far,
 'Tis mimicry of noble war ; 570
 And with that gallant pastime reft

Were all of Douglas I have left.
 I met young Malcolm as I stray'd
 Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
 Nor stray'd I safe ; for, all around, 575
 Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
 This youth, though still a royal ward,
 Risk'd life and land to be my guard.
 And through the passes of the wood
 Guided my steps, not unpursued ; 580
 And Roderick shall his welcome make,
 Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
 Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
 Nor peril aught for me again."

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came, 585
 Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,
 Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
 Fail'd aught in hospitality.
 In talk and sport they whiled away
 The morning of that summer day ; 590
 But at high noon a courier light
 Held secret parley with the knight,
 Whose moody aspect soon declared,
 That evil were the news he heard.
 Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head ; 595
 Yet was the evening banquet made,
 Ere he assembled round the flame,
 His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
 And Ellen, too ; then cast around
 His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground, 600
 As studying phrase that might avail
 Best to convey unpleasant tale.

Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said :—

XXVIII.

“Short be my speech ;—nor time affords, 605
 Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
 Kinsman and father,—if such name
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim ;
 Mine honour'd mother :—Ellen—why,
 My cousin, turn away thine eye?— 610
 And Græme ; in whom I hope to know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy command,
 And leading in thy native land,—
 List all !—The King's vindictive pride 615
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
 Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
 To share their monarch's silvan game,
 Themselves in bloody toils were snared ;
 And when the banquet they prepared, 620
 And wide their loyal portals flung,
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
 From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide, 625
 And from the silver Teviot's side ;
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
 So faithless, and so ruthless known, 630
 Now hither comes ; his end the same,
 The same pretext of silvan game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
 By fate of Border chivalry.

Yet more : amid Glentfinlas' green, 635
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know :
Your counsel in the streight I show."

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye, 640
Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Grame ;
But from his glance it well appear'd, 645
'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd ;
While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
The Douglas thus his counsel said :—
" Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er ; 650
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower ;
For well thou know'st, at this grey head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy King's command, 655
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart, 660
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er."—

XXX.

“No, by mine honour,” Roderick said, 665
 “So help me Heaven, and my good blade !
 No, never ! Blasted be yon Pine,
 My father’s ancient crest and mine,
 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart ! 670
 Hear my blunt speech : grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid ;
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 Will friends and allies flock enow ;
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief, 675
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling’s porch ;
 And, when I light the nuptial torch, 680
 A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James !
 —Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray ;
 I meant not all my heat might say.— 685
 Small need of inroad, or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foil’d king, from pathless glen, 690
 Shall bootless turn him home again.”

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o’er

The ocean tide's incessant roar, 695
 Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till waken'd by the morning beam';
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around, 700
 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale ;—
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel, 705
 Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow ? —
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
 As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
 By crossing terrors wildly toss'd, 710
 Still for the Douglas fearing most,
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
 To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye. 715
 And eager rose to speak—but ere
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
 Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
 Where death seem'd combating with life ;
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood, 720
 One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
 Left its domain as wan as clay.
 “Roderick, enough ! enough !” he cried,
 “My daughter cannot be thy bride ; 725
 Not that the blush to wooer dear

Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
 It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er 730
 Will level a rebellious spear.
 'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
 To rein a steed and wield a brand ;
 I see him yet, the princely boy !
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy : 735
 I love him still, despite my wrongs
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
 O seek the grace you well may find,
 Without a cause to mine combined."

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode ; 740
 The waving of his tartans broad,
 And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
 With ire and disappointment vied,
 Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
 Like the ill Demon of the night, 745
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
 Upon the nighted pilgrim's way :
 But, unrequited Love ! thy dart
 Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
 And Roderick, with thine anguish stung, 750
 At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
 While eyes that mock'd at tears before,
 With bitter drops were running o'er.
 The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope
 Scarce in that ample breast had scope, 755
 But, struggling with his spirit proud,
 Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,
 While every sob—so mute were all—

Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look, 760
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook ;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke, 765
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid 770
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid :
“ Back, beardless boy ! ” he sternly said,
“ Back, minion ! hold'st thou thus at nought
The lesson I so lately taught ?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid, 775
Thank thou for punishment delay'd.”
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
“ Perish my name, if aught afford
Its Chieftain safety save his sword ! ” 780
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength :—“ Chieftains, forego ! 785
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar !
What ! is the Douglas fall'n so far,
His daughter's hand is deem'd the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil ! ” 790

Sullen and slowly, they unclasp,
 As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
 And each upon his rival glared,
 With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung, 795
 Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
 And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
 As falter'd through terrific dream.
 Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
 And veil'd his wrath in scornful word : 800
 " Rest safe till morning ; pity 'twere
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air !
 Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
 Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan, 805
 The pageant pomp of earthly man.
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
 Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
 Malise, what ho ?"—his henchman came ;
 " Give our safe conduct to the Graeme." 810
 Young Malcolm answer'd, calm and bold,
 " Fear nothing for thy favourite hold ;
 The spot, an angel deign'd to grace,
 Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.
 Thy churlish courtesy for those 815
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
 As safe to me the mountain way
 At midnight as in blaze of day,
 Though with his boldest at his back,
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.— 820
 Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
 Naught here of parting will I say.

Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
 So secret, but we meet again.—
 Chieftain ! we too shall find an hour ;”— 825
 He said, and left the silvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
 (Such was the Douglas's command,)
 And anxious told, how, on the morn,
 The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn, 830
 The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
 Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
 Much were the peril to the Grame
 From those who to the signal came ;
 Far up the lake 'twere safest land, 835
 Himself would row him to the strand.
 He gave his counsel to the wind,
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll'd,
 His ample plaid in tighten'd fold, 840
 And stripp'd his limbs to such array,
 As best might suit the watery way,—

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt : “ Farewell to thee,
 Pattern of old fidelity ! ”
 The Minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,— 845
 “ O ! could I point a place of rest !
 My sovereign holds in ward my land,
 My uncle leads my vassal band ;
 To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
 Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade. 850
 Yet, if there be one faithful Grame

Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honour'd Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag in mountain cell ;
Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber dare,— 855
I may not give the rest to air !
Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side.”
Then plunged he in the flashing tide. 860
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steer'd him from the shore ;
And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
Darkening across each puny wave, 865
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb ;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell. 870
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD.

The Gathering.

I.

Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be ! 5
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight ! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well, 10
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew ;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound, 15
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II.

The Summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue ; 20
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy ;
The mountain-shadows on her breast 25

Were neither broken nor at rest ;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice rear'd of silver bright ; 30
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemm'd with dewdrops, led her fawn ;
 The grey mist left the mountain side,
 The torrent show'd its glistening pride ;
 Invisible in flecked sky, 35
 The lark sent down her revelry ;
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush ;
 In answer coo'd the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest, and love. 40

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
 With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
 And eyed the rising sun, and laid 45
 His hand on his impatient blade.
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
 Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught ;
 For such Antiquity had taught 50
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
 The Cross of Fire should take its road.
 The shrinking band stood oft aghast
 At the impatient glance he cast ;—
 Such glance the mountain eagle threw, 55
 As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
 She spread her dark sails on the wind,

And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake: 60

IV.

A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood, 65
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair ;
His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore. 70
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Nor his the mien of Christian priest, 75
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look ;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er. 80
The hallow'd creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse ;
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound, 85
And in mid chase call'd off his hound ;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,

He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien. 90

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain, 95
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art !
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand
Which once could burst an iron band ; 100
Beneath the broad and ample bone
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest ;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime 105
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time ;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreath'd with chaplet, flush'd and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume. 110
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade :
—She said, no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair 115
The virgin snood did Alice wear ;
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite, 120

But lock'd her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years ;
A moody and heart-broken boy, 125
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail, 130
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire !
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate, 135
The cloister oped her pitying gate ;
In vain, the learning of the age
Unclasp'd the sable-lettered page ;
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind. 140
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride ;
Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung, 145
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child. 150

Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
 He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
 Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
 Beheld the River Demon rise ;
 The mountain mist took form and limb, 155
 Of noontide hag, or goblin grim ;
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 Swell'd with the voices of the dead ;
 Far on the future battle-heath
 His eye beheld the ranks of death : 160
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurl'd,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind ;
 The only parent he could claim 165
 Of ancient Alpine lineage came.
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream :
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
 Of charging steeds, careering fast. 170
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride :
 The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
 All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
 He girt his loins, and came to show 175
 The signals of impending woe,
 And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared ;—and from the rock,
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock, 180
 Before the kindling pile was laid,
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.

Patient the sickening victim eyed
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
 Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb, 185
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
 A slender crosslet framed with care.
 A cubit's length in measure due ;
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew, 190
 Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
 The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high, 195
 With wasted hand, and haggard eye.
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,
 While his anathema he spoke :

IX.

"Woe to the clansmen, who shall view
 This symbol of sepulchral yew, 200
 Forgetful that its branches grew
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
 On Alpine's dwelling low !
 Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust, 205
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
 Each clansman's execration just
 Shall doom him wrath and woe."
 He paused ;—the word the vassals took,
 With forward step and fiery look, 210
 On high their naked brands they shook,
 Their clattering targets wildly strook ;
 And first in murmur low,
 Then, like the billow in his course,

That far to seaward finds his source, 215
 And flings to shore his muster'd force,
 Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
 "Woe to the traitor, woe!"
 Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
 The joyous wolf from covert drew, 220
 The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
 They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X.

The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
 The Monk resumed his mutter'd spell :
 Dismal and low its accents came, 225
 The while he seathed the Cross with flame ;
 And the few words that reach'd the air,
 Although the holiest name was there,
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
 But when he shook above the crowd 230
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud :—
 "Woe to the wretch who fails to rear
 At this dread sign the ready spear !
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,
 His home, the refuge of his fear, 235
 A kindred fate shall know ;
 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
 While maids and matrons on his name
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame, 240
 And infamy and woe."
 Then rose the cry of females, shrill
 As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
 Denouncing misery and ill,
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill 245
 Of curses stammer'd slow ;

Answering, with imprecation dread,
 "Sunk be his home in embers red !
 And cursed be the meanest shed
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head, 250
 We doom to want and woe !"
 A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !
 And the grey pass where birches wave, 255
 On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
 And hard his labouring breath he drew,
 While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
 And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand, 260
 He meditated curse more dread,
 And deadlier, on the clansman's head
 Who, summon'd to his chieftain's aid,
 The signal saw and disobey'd.
 The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,
 He quench'd among the bubbling blood, 265
 And, as again the sign he rear'd,
 Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard :
 "When flits this Cross from man to man,
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
 Burst be the ear that fails to heed ! 270
 Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !
 May ravens tear the careless eyes,
 Wolves make the coward heart their prize !
 As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
 So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth ! 275
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction dark !
 And be the grace to him denied,

Bought by this sign to all beside ! ”
 He ceased ; no echo gave again 280
 The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
 From Brian's hand the symbol took :
 “ Speed, Malise, speed ! ” he said, and gave
 The crosslet to his henchman brave. 285
 “ The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
 Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed ! ”
 Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
 A barge across Loch Katrine flew ;
 High stood the henchman on the prow, 290
 So rapidly the barge-men row,
 The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat
 Were all unbroken and afloat,
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,
 When it had near'd the mainland hill ; 295
 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom wide,
 When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed ! the dun deer's hide 300
 On fleeter foot was never tied.
 Speed, Malise, speed ! such cause of haste
 Thine active sinews never braced.
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its crest ; 305
 With short and springing footstep pass
 The trembling bog and false morass ;

Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound ;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep; 310
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap :
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now ;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career ! 315
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,
With rivals in the mountain race ;
But danger, death, and warrior deed, 320
Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed !

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise ;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They pour'd each hardy tenant down. 325
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace ;
He show'd the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fi-herman forsook the strand, 330
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand ;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe ;
The herds without a keeper stray'd,
The plough was in mid-furrow staid, 335
The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay ;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,

Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms ;
So swept the tumult and affray 340
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake ! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear !
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep, 345
The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

xv.

Speed, Malise, speed ! The lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half-seen, 350
Half-hidden in the copse so green ;
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
Their Lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way. 355
—What woeful accents load the gale ?
The funeral yell, the female wail !
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase, 360
At Roderick's side shall fill his place !—
Within the hall, where torch's ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear. 365
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why ;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

XVI.

Coronach.

He is gone on the mountain, 370
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow, 375
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow !
The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper 380
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest. 385
Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber.
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber !
Like the dew on the mountain, 390
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain
Thou art gone, and for ever !

XVII.

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed, 395
Poor Stumah ! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,

Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
 As if some stranger step he hears.
 'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread, 400
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
 But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast :—unheeding all,
 The henchman bursts into the hall ; 405
 Before the dead man's bier he stood ;
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood ;
 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead ;
 Speed forth the signal ! clansmen, speed !"

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line, 410
 Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign,
 In haste the stripling to his side
 His father's dirk and broadsword tied ;
 But when he saw his mother's eye
 Watch him in speechless agony, 415
 Back to her open'd arms he flew,
 Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
 "Alas !" she sobb'd,—“and yet he gone,
 And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son !”
 One look he cast upon the bier, 420
 Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,
 Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
 And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
 Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
 First he essays his fire and speed, 425
 He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
 Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
 Suspended was the widow's tear
 While yet his footsteps she could hear ;

And when she mark'd the henchman's eye 430
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run
That should have sped thine errand on ;
The oak has fall'n, — the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now. 435
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's behest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head ! 440
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang and martial call
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand ; 445
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrow'd force ; 450
Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew ; 455
The tear that gather'd in his eye
He left the mountain-breeze to dry ;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green, 460
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.

Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge ;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reel'd his sympathetic eye, 465
He dash'd amid the torrent's roar :
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high, 470
With hoarser swell the stream raced by ;
And had he fall'n,—for ever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir !
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife, 475
Until the opposing bank he gain'd,
And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

XX.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
Had sought the chapel of St. Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave 480
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude but glad procession, came
Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame ; 485
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear :
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry ;
And minstrels, that in measures vied 490
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.

With virgin step, and bashful hand,
 She held the 'kerchief's snowy band ; 495
 The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
 Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
 And the glad mother in her ear
 Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the churchyard gate ? 500
 The messenger of fear and fate !
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his eyes.
 All dripping from the recent flood,
 Panting and travel-soil'd he stood, 505
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the appointed word :
 " The muster-place is Lanrick mead :
 Speed forth the signal ! Norman speed ! "
 And must he change so soon the hand 510
 Just link'd to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and brand ?
 And must the day, so blithe that rose,
 And promised rapture in the close,
 Before its setting hour, divide 515
 The bridegroom from the plighted bride ?
 O fatal doom !—it must ! it must !
 Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
 Her summons dread, brook no delay ;
 Stretch to the race—away ! away ! 520

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
 And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
 Until he saw the starting tear

Speak woe he might not stop to cheer :
 Then, trusting not a second look, 525
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
 —What in the racer's bosom stirr'd ?
 The sickening pang of hope deferr'd, 530
 And memory, with a torturing train
 Of all his morning visions vain.
 Mingled with love's impatience, came
 The manly thirst for martial fame ;
 The stormy joy of mountaineers, 535
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears ;
 And zeal for clan and Chieftain burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field returning.
 With war's red honours on his crest,
 To clasp his Mary to his breast. 540
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,
 While high resolve, and feeling strong
 Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

Song.

The heath this night must be my bed, 545
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee, Mary :
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
 My couch may be my bloody plaid, 550
 My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid !
 It will not waken me, Mary !

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow, 555

And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know ;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary. 560

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if return'd from conquer'd foes 565
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary !

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze, 570
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below ;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far, 575
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil,
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course ; 580
Thence southward turn'd its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim

A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the grey sire, whose trembling hand 585
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
 Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
 Muster'd its little horde of men, 590
 That met as torrents from the height
 In Highland dales their streams unite,
 Still gathering, as they pour along,
 A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
 Till at the rendezvous they stood 595
 By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,
 Each train'd to arms since life began,
 Owning no tie but to his clan,
 No oath but by his chieftain's hand,
 No law but Roderick Dhu's command. 600

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
 Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
 To view the frontiers of Menteith.
 All backward came with news of truce : 605
 Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
 In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
 No banner waved on Cardross gate,
 On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
 Nor scared the Herons from Loch Con ; 610
 All seem'd at peace.—Now wot ye why
 The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
 Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scann'd with care ?
 In Benvenue's most darksome cleft, 615

A fair, though cruel, pledge was left ;
 For Douglas, to his promise true,
 That morning from the isle withdrew,
 And in a deep sequester'd dell
 Had sought a low and lonely cell. 620
 By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
 Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung ;
 A softer name the Saxons gave,
 And called the grot the Goblin-Cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat, 625
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
 The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
 Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast ;
 Its trench had staid full many a rock,
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock 630
 From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
 And form'd the rugged silvan grot.
 The oak and birch, with mingled shade, 635
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden shone
 Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity. 640
 No murmur waked the solemn still,
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill ;
 But when the wind chafed with the lake,
 A sullen sound would upward break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke 645
 The incessant war of wave and rock.
 Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,

Each warrior was a chosen man, 680
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand, 685
That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII.

Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turn'd apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode. 690
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more ;
But he who stems a stream with sand, 695
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love !
Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost ; 700
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze 705
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark ! what mingles in the strain ?
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy. 710

What melting voice attends the strings ?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

Hymn to the Virgin.

Ave Maria ! maiden mild !

Listen to a maiden's prayer !
Thou canst hear though from the wild, 715
Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer ;
Mother, hear a suppliant child ! 720

Ave Maria !

Ave Maria ! undefiled !

The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there. 725
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled !
Then, Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child !

Ave Maria ! 730

Ave Maria ! stainless styled !

Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care, 735
Beneath thy guidance reconciled ;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child !

Ave Maria !

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn— 740
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline. 745
Then while his plaid he round him cast,
“It is the last time,—’tis the last,”
He mutter’d thrice.—“the last time e’er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!”
It was a goading thought—his stride 750
Hied hastier down the mountain-side ;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant ’cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way, 755
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where muster’d, in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine’s men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made, 760
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray’d ;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couch’d to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye
From the deep heather where they lie, 765
So well was match’d the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green ;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,

Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade. 770
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell 775
Three times return'd the martial yell :
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claim'd her evening reign.

And stirr'd him with his slacken'd bow—
 “Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
 We seek the Chieftain; on the track, 30
 Keep eagle watch till I come back.”

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
 “What of the foeman?” Norman said.—
 “Varying reports from near and far:
 This certain,—that a band of war 35
 Has for two days been ready boune,
 At prompt command, to march from Doune;
 King James, the while, with princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
 Soon will this dark and gathering cloud 40
 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior’s plaid may bear it out;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?”— 45
 “What! know ye not that Roderick’s care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the clan,
 And every child and aged man
 Unfit for arms; and given his charge, 50
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest secure?”—

IV.

“’Tis well advised—the Chieftain’s plan 55
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu

Apart from all his followers true !”—

“ It is, because last evening-tide

Brian an augury hath tried, 60

Of that dread kind which must not be

Unless in dread extremity,

The Taghairm call'd ; by which, afar,

Our sires foresaw the events of war.

Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew.” 65

MALISE.

“ Ah ! well the gallant brute I knew,

The choicest of the prey we had,

When swept our merry-men Gallangad.

His hide was snow, his horns were dark,

His red eye glow'd like fiery spark ; 70

So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,

Sore did he cumber our retreat,

And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,

Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.

But steep and flinty was the road, 75

And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,

And when we came to Dennan's Row,

A child might scatheless stroke his brow.”—

V.

NORMAN.

“ That bull was slain : his reeking hide

They stretch'd the cataract beside, 80

Whose waters their wild tumult toss

Adown the black and craggy boss

Of that huge cliff whose ample verge

Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.

Couch'd on a shelf beneath its brink, 85

Close where the thundering torrents sink,
 Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
 And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
 Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
 The wizard waits prophetic dream. 90
 Nor distant rests the Chief ;—but hush !
 See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
 The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
 To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
 Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost, 95
 That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host ?
 Or raven on the blasted oak,
 That, watching while the deer is broke,
 His morsel claims with sullen croak ! ”

MALISE.

—“ Peace ! peace ! to other than to me, 100
 Thy words were evil augury ;
 But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
 Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
 Not aught that, glean'd from heaven or hell,
 Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell. 105
 The Chieftain joins him, see—and now
 Together they descend the brow.”

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
 The Hermit Monk held solemn word :—
 “ Roderick ! it is a fearful strife, 110
 For men endow'd with mortal life,
 Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
 Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
 Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
 Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,— 115

'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
 The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish torn, 120
 This for my Chieftain have I borne !—
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 A human tongue may ne'er avouch ;
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
 Between the living and the dead, 125
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.
 At length the fateful answer came
 In characters of living flame !
 Not spoke in word nor blazed in scroll, 130
 But borne and branded on my soul ;—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care :
 Good is thine augury, and fair. 135
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offered to the auspicious blow :
 A spy has sought my land this morn,— 140
 No eve shall witness his return !
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to south ;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside, 145
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,

He light on those shall bring him down.
 —But see, who comes his news to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?"—

VIII.

“At Doune, o’er many a spear and glaive 150
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.
 I saw the Moray’s silver star,
 And mark’d the sable pale of Mar.”
 “By Alpine’s soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes. 155
 When move they on?”—“To-morrow’s noon
 Will see them here for battle boune.”—
 “Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
 But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn? 160
 Strengthened by them, we well might bide
 The battle on Benledi’s side.
 Thou couldst not! well! Clan-Alpine’s men
 Shall man the Trosach’s shaggy glen;
 Within Loch Katrine’s gorge we’ll fight, 165
 All in our maids’ and matrons’ sight,
 Each for his hearth and household fire,
 Father for child, and son for sire,
 Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye? 170
 Or dost thou come, ill-omen’d tear!
 A messenger of doubt or fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon lance
 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce through 175
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
 ’Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.
 Each to his post—all know their charge.”

The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
 The broadswords gleam, the banners dance, 180
 Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
 —I turn me from the martial roar,
 And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas !—he is gone ;
 And Ellen sits on the grey stone 185
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan ;
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 Are pour'd on her unheeding ear.—
 “ He will return—Dear lady, trust !—
 With joy return ;—he will—he must. 190
 Well was it time to seek, afar,
 Some refuge from impending war,
 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
 Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
 I saw their boats with many a light, 195
 Floating the livelong yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 By the red streamers of the north ;
 I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
 Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side, 200
 Like wild ducks couching in the fen,
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the mainland side.
 Shall not thy noble father's care 205
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare ? ”—

X.

ELLEN.

“ No, Allan, no ! Pretext so kind
 My wakeful terrors could not blind.
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,
 Douglas a parting blessing gave, 210
 The tear that glisten'd in his eye
 Drown'd not his purpose fix'd and high
 My soul, though feminine and weak,
 Can image his ; e'en as the lake,
 Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke, 215
 Reflects the invulnerable rock.
 He hears report of battle rife,
 He deems himself the cause of strife.
 I saw him redden, when the theme
 Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream 220
 Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
 Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught ?
 Oh no ? 'twas apprehensive thought
 For the kind youth,—for Roderick too— 225
 (Let me be just) that friend so true ;
 In danger both, and in our cause !
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
 Why else that solemn warning given,
 ‘ If not on earth, we meet in heaven ! ’ 230
 Why else, to Cambus-Kenneth's fane,
 If e'er return him not again,
 Am I to hie, and make me known ?
 Alas ! he goes to Scotland's throne,
 Buys his friend's safety with his own ;— 235
 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son ! ”—

XI.

“Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane 240
 As fitting place to meet again.
 Be sure he’s safe; and for the Grame,—
 Heaven’s blessing on his gallant name!—
 My vision’d sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you. 245
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,
 And think upon the harpings slow
 That presaged this approaching woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear; 250
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.
 Would we had left this dismal spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
 Of such a wondrous tale I know—
 Dear lady, change that look of woe, 255
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.”—

ELLEN.

“Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
 But cannot stop the bursting tear.”
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,
 But distant far was Ellen’s heart. 260

XII.

Ballad.

ALICE BRAND.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
 When the mavis and merle are singing,
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
 And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

XIII.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing ;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side, 295
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woun'd within the hill, --
Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd church,
His voice was ghostly shrill. 300

“ Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen ?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen ?
Or who may dare on wold to wear 305
The fairies' fatal green ?

“ Up, Urgan, up ! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christen'd man ;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For mutter'd word or ban. 310

“ Lay on him the curse of the wither'd heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye ;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.”

XIV.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood, 315
Though the birds have still'd their singing ;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands, 320
And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,— 325
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
"Tis but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood, 330
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine. 335

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here!"

XV.

Ballad continued.

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land, 340
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing :

“ And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show, 345
Like the idle gleam that December’s beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

“ And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem, 350
And now like dwarf and ape.

“ It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, ’twixt life and death, was snatch’d away 355
To the joyless Elin bower.

“ But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine.” 360

She cross’d him once—she cross’d him twice—
That lady was so brave ;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross’d him thrice, that lady bold : 365
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the navis and merle are singing, 370
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climb'd the steepy glade ;
His martial step, his stately mien, 375
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdown's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream : 380
"O stranger ! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here ?"—
"An evil hap how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee ?
By promise bound, my former guide 385
Met me betimes this morning tide,
And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
"The happy path !—what ! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought, 390
Of guarded pass ?"—"No, by my faith !
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
"O haste thee, Allan, to the kern,
—Yonder his tartans I discern ;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure 395
That he will guide the stranger sure !—
What prompted thee, unhappy man ?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here." 400

XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee ;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,

When love or honour's weigh'd with death.
Then let me profit by my chance, 405
And speak my purpose bold at once
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled :
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war. 410
Near Bochart's my horses wait ;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower"—
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art, 415
To say I do not read thy heart ;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear,
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track ; 420
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on!—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame, 425
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlaw'd and exil'd, under ban ;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.— 430
Still would'st thou speak?—then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart ; 435
Forgive, be generous, and depart!"

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye, 440
To give her steadfast speech the lie ;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony, 445
As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffer'd to attend her side, 450
As brother would a sister guide.—
“ O ! little know'st thou Roderick's heart !
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou mayst trust yon wily kern.” 455
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made ;
Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,
He paus'd, and turn'd, and came again. 460

XIX.

“ Hear, lady yet a parting word !—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave, 465
To bring it back, and boldly claim

The recompense that I would name,
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield, 470
His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign. 475
Seek thou the king without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me.”
He placed the golden circlet on, 480
Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He join'd his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown, 485
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosach's glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill;
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high— 490
“Murdoch! was that a signal cry?”—
He stammer'd forth—“I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—“Ah! gallant grey! 495
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.—

Murdoch, move first—but silently ;
 Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die ! ”
 Jealous and sullen on they fared, 500
 Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
 Around a precipice's edge,
 When lo ! a wasted female form,
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm, 505
 In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
 Stood on a cliff beside the way,
 And glancing round her restless eye,
 Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
 Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy. 510
 Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom :
 With gesture wild she waved a plume
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing ;
 Such spoils her desperate step had sought, 515
 Where scarce was footing for the goat.
 The tartan plaid she first descried,
 And shriek'd till all the rocks replied ;
 As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,
 For then the Lowland garb she knew ; 520
 And then her hands she wildly wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she sung—
 She sung !—the voice, in better time,
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime ;
 And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still 525
 Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII.

Song.

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
 They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot pray in Highland tongue. 530
 But were I now where Allan glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest, and pray
 That Heaven would close my wintry day !

 'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid, 535
 They made me to the church repair ;
 It was my bridal morn they said,
 And my true love would meet me there.
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drown'd in blood the morning smile ! 540
 And woe betide the fairy dream !
 I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII.

" Who is this maid ? what means her lay ?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle grey, 545
 As the lone heron spreads his wing,
 By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."
 "'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
 " A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
 Ta'en on the morn she was a bride, 550
 When Roderick foray'd Devan-side.
 The gay bridegroom resistance made,
 And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.

I marvel she is now at large,
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge. 555
 Hence, brain-sick fool ! " — He raised his bow : —
 " Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
 As ever peasant pitch'd a bar ! " —
 " Thanks, champion, thanks," the Maniac cried,
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's side. 561
 " See the grey pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true-love through the air !
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume ! 565
 No ! — deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall batten on his bones,
 And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid air staid,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free, 570
 Meet signal for their revelry." —

XXIV.

" Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still ! " —
 " O ! thou look'st kindly, and I will. —
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green ; 575
 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.
 " For O my sweet William was forester true,
 He stole poor Blanche's heart away !
 His coat it was all of the greenwood hue, 580
 And so blithely he trill'd the Lowland lay !
 " It was not that I meant to tell . . .
 But thou art wise, and guessest well."
 Then, in a low and broken tone,

And hurried note, the song went on. 585
Still on the Clansman fearfully
She fix'd her apprehensive eye ;
Then turn'd it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV.

“ The toils are pitch'd, and the stakes are set, 590
Ever sing merrily, merrily ;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

“ It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily ; 595
He came stately down the glen,—
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“ It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully ;
She warn'd him of the toils below, 600
O, so faithfully, faithfully !

“ He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily ;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly.” 605

XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-toss'd,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost ;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare, 610
But lion of the hunt aware,

He waved at once his blade on high,
 "Disclose thy treachery, or die!"
 Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
 But in his race his bow he drew. 615
 The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
 And thrill'd in Blanche's faded breast,—
 Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
 For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
 With heart of fire, and foot of wind, 620
 The fierce avenger is behind!
 Fate judges of the rapid strife—
 The forfeit death—the prize is life!
 Thy kindred ambush lies before,
 Close couch'd upon the heathery moor; 625
 Them couldst thou reach!--it may not be—
 Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er shalt see,
 The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
 —Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
 As lightning strikes the pine to dust; 630
 With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain
 Ere he can win his blade again.
 Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon eye,
 He grimly smiled to see him die;
 Then slower wended back his way, 635
 Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
 Her elbow resting on her knee;
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
 And gazed on it, and feebly laugh'd; 640
 Her wreath of broom and feathers grey
 Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
 The Knight to staunch the life-stream tried,—

“Stranger, it is in vain !” she cried.
“This hour of death has given me more 645
Of reason’s power than years before ;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye, 650
That thou wert mine avenger born.—
Seest thou this tress ?—O ! still I’ve worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair !
It once was bright and clear as thine, 655
But blood and tears have dimm’d its shine.
I will not tell thee when ’twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim’s head—
My brain would turn !—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave, 660
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still.—O God ! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light !—
O ! by thy knighthood’s honour’d sign, 665
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine’s Clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom, 670
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan’s wrong !—
They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God ! . . . farewell.”

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James ; 675
Fast pour’d his eyes at pity’s claims ;

And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murder'd maid expire.
“ God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief ! ” 680
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair ;
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
And placed it on his bonnet-side :
“ By Him whose word is truth ! I swear, 685
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu !
—But hark ! what means yon faint halloo ?
The chase is up,—but they shall know, 690
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe.”
Barr'd from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turn'd back. 695
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er :—
“ Of all my rash adventures past, 700
This frantic feat must prove the last !
Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
That all this Highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune ?— 705
Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout !—
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe :

I'll couch me here till evening grey, 710
Then darkling try my dangerous way."

XXIX.

The shades of eve came slowly down,
The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell ; 715
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's steps aright
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step, and ear awake, 720
He climbs the crag and threads the brake ;
And not the summer solstice, there,
Temper'd the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze, that swept the wold,
Benumb'd his drenched limbs with cold. 725
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journey'd on ;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
A watch-fire close before him burn'd. 730

XXX.

Beside its embers, red and clear,
Bask'd, in his plaid, a mountaineer ;
And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
"Thy name and purpose ! Saxon, stand !"
"A stranger." "What dost thou require ?" 735
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost."

Yet more, -- upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn, —
Thou art with numbers overborne ;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand, 775
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand :
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws ;
To assail a wearied man were shame, .
And stranger is a holy name ; 780
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day ;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard, 786
As far as Coilantogle's ford ;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
" I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given ! " 790
" Well, rest thee ; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
With that he shook the gather'd heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath ;
And the brave foemen, side by side, 795
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Combat.

I.

Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,
 When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
 It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
 And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
 And lights the fearful path on mountain-side ;— 5
 Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
 Giving to horror grace, to danger pride, 10
 Shine martial faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
 Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of War.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen, 10
 Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
 When, rousing at its glimmer red,
 The warriors left their lowly bed,
 Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
 Mutter'd their soldier matins by, 15
 And then awaked their fire, to steal,
 As short and rude, their soldier meal.
 That o'er, the Gael around him threw
 His graceful plaid of varied hue,
 And, true to promise, led the way, 20
 By thicket green and mountain grey.
 A wildering path !—they winded now
 Along the precipice's brow,
 Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
 The windings of the Forth and Teith, 25
 And all the vales between that lie,

Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky :
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain 30
Assistance from the hand to gain ;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear ! 35

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose ;
Ever the hollow path twined on, 40
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone ;
A hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak, 45
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still, 50
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill :
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrents down had borne,
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand. 55
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,

And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds? traversed by few, 60
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

“ Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side :
Yet, sooth to tell,” the Saxon said,
“ I dreamt not now to claim its aid. 65
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,
All seem'd as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill ;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar, 70
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep perchance the villain lied.”
“ Yet why a second venture try ? ”
“ A warrior thou, and ask me why ! — 75
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause
As gives the poor mechanic laws ?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day ;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide 80
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,
The merry glance of mountain maid :
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone.” 85

V.

“ Thy secret keep, I urge thee not ;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,

Against Clan-Alpine, rais'd by Mar ?”
 —“ No, by my word ;— of bands prepared 90
 To guard King James's sports I heard ;
 Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
 This muster of the mountaineer,
 Their pennons will abroad be flung,
 Which else in Donne had peaceful hung.”— 95
 “ Free be they flung ! for we were loth
 Their silken folds should feast the moth.
 Free be they flung !—as free shall wave
 Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
 But, Stranger, peaceful since you came, 100
 Bewilder'd in the mountain game,
 Whence the bold boast by which you show
 Vich-Alpine's vow'd and mortal foe ?” --
 “ Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
 Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu, 105
 Save as an outlaw'd desperate man,
 The chief of a rebellious clan,
 Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
 With ruffian dagger stabb'd a knight :
 Yet this alone might from his part 110
 Sever each true and loyal heart.”

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
 Dark lower'd the clansman's sable scowl.
 A space he paused, then sternly said,
 “ And heard'st thou why he drew his blade ? 115
 Heard'st thou, that shameful word and blow
 Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe ?
 What reck'd the Chieftain if he stood
 On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood ?
 He rights such wrong where it is given, 120

If it were in the court of heaven."—
 "Still was it outrage ;—yet, 'tis true,
 Not then claim'd sovereignty his due ;
 While Albany, with feeble hand,
 Held borrow'd truncheon of command, 125
 The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,
 Was stranger to respect and power.
 But then, thy Chieftain's robber life !—
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
 Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland swain 130
 His herds and harvest rear'd in vain.—
 Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn
 The spoils from such foul foray borne."

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
 And answer'd with disdainful smile,— 135
 "Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
 I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
 Far to the south and east, where lay,
 Extended in succession gay,
 Deep waving fields and pastures green, 140
 With gentle slopes and groves between :—
 These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
 Were once the birthright of the Gael :
 The stranger came with iron hand,
 And from our fathers reft the land. 145
 Where dwell we now ? See, rudely swell
 Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
 Ask we this savage hill we tread,
 For fatten'd steer or household bread,
 Ask we for flocks these shingles dry, 150
 And well the mountain might reply,—
 ' To you, as to your sires of yore,

Belong the target and claymore !
 I give you shelter in my breast,
 Your own good blades must win the rest.' 155
 Pent in this fortress of the North,
 Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
 To spoil the spoiler as we may,
 And from the robber rend the prey ?
 Ay, by my soul !—While on yon plain 160
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain ;
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
 But one along yon river's maze,—
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share. 165
 Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
 That plundering Lowland field and fold
 Is aught but retribution true ?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."—

VIII.

Answer'd Fitz-James,—“ And, if I sought, 170
 Think'st thou no other could be brought ?
 What deem ye of my path waylaid ?
 My life given o'er to ambuscade ? ”—
 “ As of a meed to rashness due :
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,— 175
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go ;
 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy, 180
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—
 “ Well, let it pass ; nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,

To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow. 185
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride :
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
 In peace ; but when I come again,
 I come with banner, brand, and bow, 190
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.
 For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
 Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
 As I, until before me stand
 This rebel chieftain and his band ! " 195

IX.

" Have, then, thy wish ! "—He whistled shrill,
 And he was answer'd from the hill ;
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,
 From crag to crag the signal flew.
 Instant, through copse and heath, arose 200
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows ;
 On right, on left, above, below,
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe ;
 From shingles grey their lances start,
 The bracken bush sends forth the dart, 205
 The rushes and the willow-wand
 Are bristling into axe and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
 That whistle garrison'd the glen 210
 At once with full five hundred men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given.
 Watching their leader's beck and will,
 All silent there they stood, and still. 215
 Like the loose crags whose threat'ning mass

Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung, 220
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benedi's living side,
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now? 225
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true ;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu !"

X.

Fitz-James was brave :—Though to his heart
The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air, 230
Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before :—
"Come one, come all ! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I." 235
Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand : 240
Down sunk the disappearing band ;
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood ;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low ; 245
It seem'd as if their mother Earth
Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,

Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
 The next but swept a lone hill-side, 250
 Where heath and fern were waving wide :
 The sun's last glance was glinted back
 From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
 The next, all unreflected, shone
 On bracken green, and cold grey stone. 255

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XI.

Fitz-James look'd round—yet scarce believed
 The witness that his sight received ;
 Such apparition well might seem
 Delusion of a dreadful dream.
 Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed, 260
 And to his look the Chief replied :
 “ Fear nought—nay, that I need not say—
 But—doubt not aught from mine array.
 Thou art my guest ;—I pledged my word
 As far as Coilantogle ford : 265
 Nor would I call a clansman's brand
 For aid against one valiant hand,
 Though on our strife lay every vale
 Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
 So move we on ; I only meant 270
 To show the reed on which you leant,
 Deeming this path you might pursue
 Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”
 They moved :—I said Fitz-James was brave,
 As ever knight that belted glaive ; 275
 Yet dare not say, that now his blood
 Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
 As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
 That seeming lonesome pathway through,
 Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife 280

With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonour'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanish'd guardians of the ground, 285
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind 290
The pass was left ; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear. 295

XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reach'd that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines 300
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore, her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the Chieftain staid,
Threw down his target and his plaid, 305
And to the Lowland warrior said—
“ Bold Saxon ! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan, 310
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.

Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
 A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
 See, here, all vantageless I stand, 315
 Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand :
 For this is Coilantogle ford,
 And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII.

The Saxon paused :—" I ne'er delay'd,
 When foeman bade me draw my blade ; 320
 Nay more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death :
 Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
 And my deep debt for life preserved,
 A better meed have well deserved :
 Can nought but blood our feud atone ? 325
 Are there no means ?"—" No, stranger, none !
 And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
 The Saxon cause rests on thy steel ;
 For thus spoke Fate by prophet bred
 Between the living and the dead ; 330
 ' Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
 His party conquers in the strife.'"
 " Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
 " The riddle is already read.
 Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,— 335
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
 Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy,
 Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,
 When, if thou wilt be still his foe, 340
 Or if the King shall not agree
 To grant thee grace and favour free,
 I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
 That, to thy native strengths restored,

With each advantage shalt thou stand, 345
That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV.

Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye—
" Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu ? 350
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate !
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate :—
My clansman's blood demands revenge.
Not yet prepared ?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light 355
As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
" I thank thee, Roderick, for the word ! 360
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword ;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell ! and, ruth, begone !—
Yet think not that by thee alone, 365
Proud Chief ! can courtesy be shown :
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast. 370
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain, 375
As what they ne'er might see again ;

'Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw, 380
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dash'd aside ;
For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward, 385
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard ;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood : 390
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And shower'd his blows like wintry rain :
And, as firm rock or castle-roof 395
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill :
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand, 400
And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

" Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade ! "
" Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy ! 405
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."

—Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung : 410
Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own !
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown !
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel 415
Through bars of brass and triple steel !—
They tug, they strain ! down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
His knee was planted on his breast ; 420
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright !—
—But hate and fury ill supplied 425
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game ;
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye. 430
Down came the blow ! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp ;
Unwounded from the dreadful close, 435
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII.

He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeem'd, unhoped, from desperate strife ;

Next on his foe his look he cast,
 Whose every gasp appear'd his last ; 440
 In Roderick's gore he dipp'd the braid,—
 “ Poor Blanche ! thy wrongs are dearly paid :
 Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
 The praise that Faith and Valour give.”
 With that he blew a bugle note, 445
 Undid the collar from his throat,
 Unbonneted, and by the wave
 Sate down his brow and hands to lave.
 Then faint afar are heard the feet
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet ; 450
 The sounds increase, and now are seen
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln green ;
 Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
 By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed ;
 Each onward held his headlong course, 455
 And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
 With wonder view'd the bloody spot—
 —“ Exclaim not, gallants ! question not.
 You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
 And bind the wounds of yonder knight ; 460
 Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
 We destined for a fairer freight,
 And bring him on to Stirling straight :
 I will before at better speed,
 To seek fresh horse and fitting weed. 465
 The sun rides high ;—I must be boune,
 To see the archer-game at noon ;
 But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
 De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

“ Stand, Bayard, stand ! ”—the steed obey'd, 470
 With arching neck and bended head,

And glancing eye and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid, 475
But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turn'd on the horse his armed heel,
And stirr'd his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air, 480
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch'd, along the plain they go.
They dash'd that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew ; 485
Still at the gallop prick'd the Knight,
His merry-men follow'd as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith ! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide ;
Torry and Lendrick now are past, 490
And Deanstown lies behind them cast ;
They rise, the banner'd towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon ;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochertyre ; 495
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier ;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth ! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground, 500
With splash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth !
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career look'd down. 505

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strain'd,
 Sudden his steed the leader rein'd ;
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his stirrup sprung :—
 “ Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey, 510
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor array !
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain-side !
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom ? ”
 “ No, by my word ;—a burly groom 516
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A baron's train would nobly grace.”—
 “ Out, out, De Vaux ! can fear supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye ? 520
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew ;
 Like form in Scotland is not seen,
 Treads not such step on Scottish green.
 'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle ! 525
 The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
 Away, away, to court, to show
 The near approach of dreaded foe :
 The King must stand upon his guard :
 Douglas and he must meet prepared.” 530
 Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
 They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
 From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey grey,
 Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf, 535

Held sad communion with himself : —
“ Yes ! all is true my fears could frame ;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel. 540
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late !
The abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven ;—
—Be pardon'd one repining tear ! 545
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent !—but that is by,
And now my business is—to die.
—Ye towers ! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled ; 550
And thou, O sad and fatal mound !
That oft has heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb 555
Prepare—for Douglas seeks his doom !
—But hark ! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel ?
And see ! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet ! 560
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.
James will be there ; he loves such show, 565
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.

I'll follow to the Castle park, 570
 And play my prize : King James shall mark
 If age has tamed these sinews stark,
 Whose force so oft, in happier days,
 His boyish wonder loved to praise."

XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung, 575
 The quivering draw-bridge rock'd and rung,
 And echo'd loud the flinty street
 Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
 As slowly down the steep descent
 Fair Scotland's King and nobles went, 580
 While all along the crowded way
 Was jubilee and loud huzza.
 And ever James was bending low,
 To his white jennet's saddlebow,
 Doffing his cap to city dame, 585
 Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
 And well the simperer might be vain,—
 He chose the fairest of the train.
 Gravely he greets each city sire,
 Commends each pageant's quaint attire, 590
 Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
 And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
 Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,—
 "Long live the Commons' King, King James !"
 Behind the King throng'd peer and knight, 595
 And noble dame and damsel bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay
 Of the steep street and crowded way.
 —But in the train you might discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern ; 600

There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,
 And the mean burgher's joys disdain'd ;
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
 Were each from home a banish'd man,
 There thought upon their own grey tower, 605
 Their waving woods, their feudal power,
 And deem'd themselves a shameful part
 Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
 Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout. 610
 There morricers, with bell at heel,
 And blade in hand, their mazes wheel ;
 But chief, beside the butts, there stand
 Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
 Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl, 615
 Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
 Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
 Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John ;
 Their bugles challenge all that will,
 In archery to prove their skill. 620
 The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
 His first shaft centred in the white,
 And when in turn he shot again,
 His second split the first in twain.
 From the King's hand must Douglas take 625
 A silver dart, the archers' stake ;
 Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,
 Some answering glance of sympathy,—
 No kind emotion made reply !
 Indifferent as to archer wight, 630
 The monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII.

Now, clear the ring ! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes, 635
Nor call'd in vain ; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame ;
Scarce better John of Alloo's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bare.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King 640
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd ; 645
Indignant then he turn'd him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone 650
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark ;
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-hair'd sires, who know the past, 655
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang. 660
The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd

A purse well fill'd with pieces broad ;
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan, 665
And sharper glance, the dark grey man :
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong ;
The old men mark'd and shook the head, 670
To see his hair with silver spread,
And wink'd aside, and told each son,
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land. 675
The women prais'd his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm ;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd, 680
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind ; 685
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honour'd place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield ;
For he whom royal eyes disown, 690
When was his form to courtiers known !

XXV.

The monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,

Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down, 695
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North,— 700
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank. 705
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn, 710
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd ;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed, 715
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck
In maiden glee with garlands deck ;
They were such playmates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high, 720
In darken'd brow and flashing eye ;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride ;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore. 725
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamour'd loud the royal train,
And brandish'd swords and staves amain,
But stern the Baron's warning—"Back ! 730
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack !
Beware the Douglas.—Yes ! behold,
King James ! The Douglas, doom'd of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war, 735
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
"Thus is my clemency repaid ?
Presumptuous Lord !" the Monarch said ;
"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan, 740
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know :
But shall a Monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow, and haughty look ?— 745
What ho ! the Captain of our Guard !
Give the offender fitting ward.—
Break off the sports !"—for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
"Break off the sports !" he said, and frown'd,
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground." 751

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marr'd the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen prick'd among the crowd,
Repell'd by threats and insult loud ; 755
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek ;

With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
 The hardier urge tumultuous war.
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep 760
 The royal spears in circle deep,
 And slowly scale the pathway steep ;
 While on the rear in thunder pour
 The rabble with disorder'd roar.
 With grief the noble Douglas saw 765
 The Commons rise against the law,
 And to the leading soldier said —
 “ Sir John of Hyndford, ’twas my blade,
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid ;
 For that good deed, permit me then 770
 A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII.

“ Hear, gentle friends ! ere yet for me,
 Ye break the bands of fealty.
 My life, my honour, and my cause,
 I tender free to Scotland's laws. 775
 Are these so weak as must require
 The aid of your misguided ire ?
 Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,
 My sense of public weal so low, 780
 That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
 Those cords of love I should unbind,
 Which knit my country and my kind ?
 O no ! Believe, in yonder tower
 It will not soothe my captive hour, 785
 To know those spears our foes should dread,
 For me in kindred gore are red ;
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
 For me, that mother wails her son ;

For me, that widow's mate expires ; 790
 For me, that orphans weep their sires ;
 That patriots mourn insulted laws,
 And curse the Douglas for the cause.
 O let your patience ward such ill,
 And keep your right to love me still ! " 795

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
 In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
 With lifted hands and eyes, they pray'd
 For blessings on his generous head
 Who for his country felt alone, 800
 And prized her blood beyond his own.
 Old men, upon the verge of life,
 Bless'd him who staid the civil strife ;
 And mothers held their babes on high,
 The self-devoted Chief to spy, 805
 Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
 To whom the prattlers owed a sire :
 Even the rough soldier's heart was moved ;
 As if behind some bier beloved,
 With trailing arms and drooping head, 810
 The Douglas up the hill he led,
 And at the Castle's battled verge,
 With sighs resign'd his honour'd charge.

XXX.

The offended Monarch rode apart,
 With bitter thought and swelling heart, 815
 And would not now vouchsafe again
 Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
 " O Lennox, who would wish to rule

This changeling crowd, this common fool ?
 Hear'st thou," he said, " the loud acclaim, 820
 With which they shout the Douglas name ?
 With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
 Strain'd for King James their morning note ;
 With like acclaim they hail'd the day,
 When first I broke the Douglas' sway ; 825
 And like acclaim would Douglas greet
 If he could hurl me from my seat.
 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
 Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain !
 Vain as the leaf upon the stream, 830
 And fickle as a changeful dream ;
 Fantastic as a woman's mood,
 And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,
 O who would wish to be thy king ! 835

XXXI.

" But soft ! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed ?
 I guess his cognizance afar—
 What from our cousin, John of Mar ?"—
 " He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound 840
 Within the safe and guarded ground :
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw'd Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summon'd his rebellious crew ; 845
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand array'd.
 The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march'd, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought ; 850

But earnestly the Earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride."

XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
I should have earlier look'd to this : 855
I lost it in this bustling day.
—Retrace with speed thy former way ;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy need.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar, 860
We do forbid the intended war :
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight ;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws. 865
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco ; fly !" — 870
He turn'd his steed.—" My liege, I hie,—
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broadswords will be drawn."
The turf the flying courser spurn'd,
And to his towers the King return'd. 875

XXXIII.

Ill with King James' mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay ;
Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the sadden'd town 880

The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumour'd feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms :— the Douglas too, 885
They mourn'd him pent within the hold,
“ Where stout Earl William was of old.”
And there his word the speaker staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade. 890
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the Castle press'd ;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore ;
At noon the deadly fray begun, 895
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH.

The Guard-Room.

I.

The sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance ;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance, 5
Scaring the prowling robber to his den ;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.
What various scenes, and, O ! what scenes of woe, 10
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam !
The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospital beholds its stream ;
The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail, 15
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream ;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang, 20
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air, 25
Deaden'd the torches' yellow glare.

In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deform'd with beard and scar, 30
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fever'd with the stern debauch ;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown, 35
Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench ;
Some labour'd still their thirst to quench ;
Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands, 40
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim 45
Of Chieftain in their leader's name ;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace ; 50
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air ;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil ;
Their rolls show'd French and German name ; 55
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill conceal'd disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.

All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield ; 60
In camps licentious, wild and bold ;
In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd ;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray, 65
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords ;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near, 70
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard ;
Sad burden to the ruffian joke, 75
And savage oath by fury spoke !—
At length up-started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent ;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer, 80
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport, 85
And shouted loud, “Renew the bowl !
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear.”

V.

Soldier's Song.

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule 90
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
 That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack ;
 Yet whoop, Barnaby ! off with thy liquor,
 Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar ! 95

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
 Yet whoop, Jack ! kiss Gillian the quicker, 100
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar !

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not ?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot ;
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys ! off with your liquor, 106
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar !

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shont.
 A soldier to the portal went,— 110
 “ Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent ;
 And,—beat for jubilee the drum !—
 A maid and minstrel with him come.”
 Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard, 115
 A harper with him, and in plaid

All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
"What news?" they roar'd :—" I only know, 120
From noon till eve we fought with foe
As wild and as untameable
As the rude mountains where they dwell ;
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."— 125
" But whence thy captives, friend ? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp ;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp !
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land, 130
The leader of a juggler band."—

VII.

" No, comrade ;—no such fortune mine.
After the fight these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And having audience of the Earl, 135
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."—
" Hear ye his boast ?" cried John of Brent, 140
Ever to strife and jangling bent ;
" Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee ?
I'll have my share howe'er it be, 145
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."
Bertram his forward step withstood ;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,

Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife ; 150
 But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
 And dropp'd at once the tartan screen :—
 So, from his morning cloud, appears
 The sun of May, through summer tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed, 155
 As on descended angel gazed ;
 Even hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke,—“ Soldiers, attend !
 My father was the soldier's friend ; 160
 Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,
 And with him in the battle bled.
 Not from the valiant, or the strong,
 Should exile's daughter suffer wrong.”—
 Answer'd De Brent, most forward still 165
 In every feat or good or ill, --
 “ I shame me of the part I play'd :
 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid !
 An outlaw I by forest laws,
 And merry Needwood knows the cause. 170
 Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,”—
 He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
 “ Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
 Hear ye, my mates ;—I go to call
 The Captain of our watch to hall : 175
 There lies my halberd on the floor ;
 And he that steps my halberd o'er,
 To do the maid injurious part,
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart !—
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough : 180
 Ye all know John de Brent. Enough.”

IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant young,—
 (Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
 Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight ;
 Gay was his mien, his humour light, 185
 And, though by courtesy controll'd,
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
 The high-born maiden ill could brook
 The scanning of his curious look
 And dauntless eye ;— and yet, in sooth, 190
 Young Lewis was a generous youth ;
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
 Ill suited to the garb and scene,
 Might lightly bear construction strange,
 And give loose fancy scope to range. 195
 “ Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid !
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
 On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
 Like errant damosel of yore ?
 Does thy high quest a knight require, 200
 Or may the venture suit a squire ? ” —
 Her dark eye flash'd ;— she paused and sigh'd,—
 “ O what have I to do with pride !—
 —Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
 A suppliant for a father's life, 205
 I crave an audience of the King.
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
 The royal pledge of grateful claims,
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James.”

X.

The signet-ring young Lewis took, 210
 With deep respect and alter'd look :

And said,—“This ring our duties own ;
 And pardon, if to worth unknown,
 In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
 Lady, in aught my folly fail'd. 215
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
 The King shall know what suitor waits.
 Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
 Repose you till his waking hour ;
 Female attendance shall obey 220
 Your hest, for service or array.
 Permit I marshal you the way.”
 But, ere she follow'd, with the grace
 And open bounty of her race,
 She bade her slender purse be shared 225
 Among the soldiers of the guard.
 The rest with thanks their guerdon took ;
 But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
 On the reluctant maiden's hold
 Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold ;— 230
 “Forgive a haughty English heart,
 And O forget its ruder part !
 The vacant purse shall be my share,
 Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war, 235
 Where gayer crests may keep afar.”
 With thanks,—'twas all she could—the maid
 His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
 Allan made suit to John of Brent :— 240
 “My lady safe, O let your grace
 Give me to see my master's face !
 His minstrel I,—to share his doom

Bound from the cradle to the tomb,
 Tenth in descent, since first my sires 245
 Waked for his noble house their lyres,
 Nor one of all the race was known
 But prized its weal above their own.
 With the Chief's birth begins our care ;
 Our harp must soothe the infant heir, 250
 Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
 His earliest feat of field or chase ;
 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse,— 255
 A doleful tribute ! — o'er his hearse.
 Then let me share his captive lot ;
 It is my right—deny it not !”—
 “ Little we reck,” said John of Brent,
 “ We Southern men, of long descent ; 260
 Nor wot we how a name—a word—
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord :
 Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
 God bless the house of Beaudesert !
 And, but I loved to drive the deer, 265
 More than to guide the labouring steer,
 I had not dwelt an outcast here.
 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me ;
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see.”

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook, 270
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led
 Through grated arch and passage dread.
 Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,
 Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din ; 275

Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many an hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
By artist form'd who deem'd it shame 280
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-brow'd porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,
And made the bar unhasp its hold. 285
They enter'd :—'twas a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon ; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture 290
Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor ;
Such as the rugged days of old
Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
“ Here,” said De Brent, “ thou may'st remain
Till the Leech visit him again. 295
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well.”
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.
Roused at the sound from lowly bed 300
A captive feebly raised his head ;
The wondering Minstrel look'd, and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu !
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deem'd the Chief he sought. 305

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,

Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
So, on his couch lay Roderick Dhu ! 310
And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot leave her from her seat ; 315
O ! how unlike her course at sea !
Or his free step on hill and lea !—
Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
—"What of thy lady !—of my clan ?—
My mother ?—Douglas ?—tell me all ! 320
Have they been ruin'd in my fall ?
Ah, yes ! or wherefore art thou here ?
Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear."—
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too.) 325
"Who fought—who fled ?—Old man, be brief ;—
Some might—for they had lost their Chief.
Who basely live !—who bravely died ?"
"O calm thee, Chief !" the Minstrel cried,
"Ellen is safe ;"—"For that thank Heaven !"
"And hopes are for the Douglas given :— 331
The Lady Margaret too is well ;
And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told,
Of combat fought so true and bold. 335
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent."

XIV.

The Chieftain rear'd his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye ;

But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks 340
 Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
 — “Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,
 With measure bold, on festal day,
 In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
 Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . . 345
 That stirring air that peals on high,
 O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
 Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst,)
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
 Fling me the picture of the fight, 350
 When met my clan the Saxon might.
 I'll listen, till my fancy hears
 The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
 These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
 For the fair field of fighting men, 355
 And my free spirit burst away,
 As if it soar'd from battle fray.”
 The trembling Bard with awe obey'd,—
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
 But soon remembrance of the sight 360
 He witness'd from the mountain's height,
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awaken'd the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along;—
 As shallop launch'd on river's tide, 365
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV.

Battle of Scal' an Duinc.

“The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue, 370

For ere he parted, he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand !—

There is no breeze upon the fern, 375

Nor ripple on the lake,
 Upon her eery nods the erne,
 The deer has sought the brake ;
 The small birds will not sing aloud,

The springing trout lies still, 380

So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
 That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
 Benledi's distant hill.

Is it the thunder's solemn sound
 That mutters deep and dread, 385

Or echoes from the groaning ground
 The warrior's measured tread ?

Is it the lightning's quivering glance
 That on the thicket streams,
 Or do they flash on spear and lance 390

The sun's retiring beams ?

—I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
 I see the Moray's silver star,
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war
 That up the lake comes winding far ! 395

To hero boune for battle-strife,
 Or bard of martial lay,
 'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
 One glance at their array !

XVI.

“ Their light-arm'd archers far and near 400

Survey'd the tangled ground,
 Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,

A twilight forest frown'd,
 Their barded horsemen, in the rear,
 The stern battalia crown'd. 405
 No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
 Still were the pipe and drum ;
 Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
 The sullen march was dumb.
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
 Or wave their flags abroad ; 411
 Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
 That shadow'd o'er their road.
 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe, 415
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirr'd the roe ;
 The host moves like a deep-sea wave,
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
 High-swelling, dark, and slow. 420
 The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
 A narrow and a broken plain,
 Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws ;
 And here the horse and spearmen pause,
 While, to explore the dangerous glen, 425
 Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
 Within that dark and narrow dell,
 As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
 Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell ! 430
 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
 The archery appear :
 For life ! for life ! their flight they ply—

And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry, 435
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued ; 440
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood ? —
'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down !
Bear back both friend and foe !' — 445
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levell'd low ;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide. — 450
'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel cows the game !
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.' —

XVIII.

" Bearing before them, in their course, 455
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light, 460
Each targe was dark below ;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurl'd them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering crash, 465
As when the whirlwind rends the ash ;

I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
 As if a hundred anvils rang !
 But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank
 Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank, 470
 — ' My banner-man, advance !
 I see,' he cried, ' their column shake.—
 Now, gallants ! for your ladies' sake,
 Upon them with the lance !'—
 The horsemen dash'd among the rout, 475
 As deer break through the broom ;
 Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
 They soon make lightsome room.
 Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
 Where, where was Roderick then ! 480
 One blast upon his bugle-horn
 Were worth a thousand men.
 And reflux through the pass of fear
 The battle's tide was pour'd ;
 Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear, 485
 Vanish'd the mountain-sword.
 As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
 Receives her roaring linn,
 As the dark caverns of the deep
 Suck the wild whirlpool in, 490
 So did the deep and darksome pass
 Devour the battle's mingled mass :
 None linger now upon the plain,
 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX.

" Now westward rolls the battle's din, 495
 That deep and doubling pass within,
 — Minstrel, away ! the work of fate

Is bearing on : its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.— 500
Grey Benvenue I soon repass'd,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set ;—the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue 505
To the deep lake has given ·
Strange gusts of wind from mountain-glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk again.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge, 510
Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll 515
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged again,
But not in mingled tide ;
The plaided warriors of the North 520
High on the mountain thunder forth
And overhang its side ;
While by the lake below appears
The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shatter'd band, 525
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand ;
Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Mark'd the fell havoc of the day. 530

—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame ;—
I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame, 565
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand :—
It darken'd,—but amid the moan
Of waves, I heard a dying groan ;—
Another flash !—the spearman floats 570
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

“ ‘ Revenge ! revenge ! ’ the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied. 575
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage ;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag, 580
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war. 585
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold.”
—But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand !—
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy 590
How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy :
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time ;
That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong

Varied his look as changed the song ; 595
 At length, no more his deafen'd ear
 The minstrel melody can hear ;
 His face grows sharp,—his hands are clench'd,
 As if some pang his heart-strings wrench'd ;
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye 600
 Is sternly fix'd on vacancy ;
 Thus, motionless and moanless, drew
 His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu !—
 Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit pass'd ; 605
 But when he saw that life was fled,
 He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

Lament.

“ And art thou cold and lowly laid,
 Thy foemen's dread, thy people's aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade ! 610
 For thee shall none a requiem say ?—
 For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
 For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
 The shelter of her exiled line,
 E'en in this prison-house of thine, 615
 I'll wail for Alpine's honour'd Pine !
 “ What groans shall yonder valleys fill !
 What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill !
 What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
 When mourns thy tribe thy battles done, 620
 Thy fall before the race was won,
 Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun !
 There breathes not clansman of thy line,
 But would have given his life for thine.—
 O woe for Alpine's honour'd Pine ! 625

“Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prison'd eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain !
And, when its notes awake again, 630
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured Pine.”—

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart, 635
Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
Where play'd, with many-colour'd gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten'd up a tapestried wall, 640
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray ;
Or if she look'd, 'twas but to say, 645
With better omen dawn'd the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy ;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared, 650
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claim'd with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Grame,
Whose answer, oft at random made, 655
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.—
Those who such simple joys have known,

Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
 But sudden, see, she lifts her head !
 The window seeks with cautious tread. 660
 What distant music has the power
 To win her in this woeful hour !
 'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
 Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV.

Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman.

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood, 665
 My idle greyhound loathes his food,
 My horse is weary of his stall,
 And I am sick of captive thrall.
 I wish I were as I have been,
 Hunting the hart in forest green, 670
 With bended bow and bloodhound free,
 For that's the life is meet for me.
 I hate to learn the ebb of time
 From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
 Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl, 675
 Inch after inch, along the wall.
 The lark was wont my matins ring,
 The sable rook my vespers sing ;
 These towers, although a king's they be,
 Have not a hall of joy for me. 680
 No more at dawning morn I rise,
 And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
 Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
 And homeward wend with evening dew ;
 A blithesome welcome blithely meet, 685
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
 That life is lost to love and me !"

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The list'ner had not turn'd her head, 690
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.
She turn'd the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain. 695
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"——"O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give, 700
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lay his better mood aside. 705
Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear, 710
And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide. 715

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,

As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even, 720
And from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid ;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised, 725
And fearful round the presence gazed ;
For him she sought, who own'd this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate !—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court ; 730
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,
For all stood bare ; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent ; 735
On him each courtier's eye was bent :
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King ! 740

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay ;
No word her choking voice commands,— 745
She show'd the ring—she clasp'd her hands.
O ! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look !
Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Check'd with a glance the circle's smile ; 750

Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
And bade her terrors be dismiss'd : —
“ Yes, Fair ; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring : 755
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask nought for Douglas ;—yester even,
His prince and he have much forgiven :
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong. 760
We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
Yield what they craved with clamour loud ;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided, and our laws.
I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern, 765
With stout De Vaux and Grey Glencairn ;
And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our Throne.—
But, lovely infidel, how now ?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow ? 770
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid ;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid.”

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The monarch drank, that happy hour, 775
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice !
Yet would not James the general eye
On Nature's raptures long should pry ; 780
He stepp'd between — “ Nay, Douglas, nay,

Steal not my proselyte away !
 The riddle 'tis my right to read,
 That brought this happy chance to speed.
 —Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray 785
 In life's more low but happier way,
 'Tis under name which veils my power,
 Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdon claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James. 790
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
 Then, in a tone apart and low,—
 "Ah, little traitress ! none must know
 What idle dream, what lighter thought, 795
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave
 Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive !"— 800
 Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King !"

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guess'd 805
 He probed the weakness of her breast ;
 But, with that consciousness, there came
 A lightening of her fears for Grème,
 And more she deem'd the monarch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire 810
 Rebellious broadsword boldly drew ;
 And, to her generous feeling true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.

“ Forbear thy suit :— the King of kings
Alone can stay life’s parting wings. 815
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand :—
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine’s Chieftain live !—
Hast thou no other boon to crave ? 820
No other captive friend to save ? ”
Blushing, she turn’d her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wish’d her sire to speak
The suit that stain’d her glowing cheek.— 825
“ Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.—
Malcolm, come forth ! ”—and, at the word,
Down kneel’d the Græme to Scotland’s Lord.
“ For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues, 830
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlaw’d man, 835
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.—
Fetters and warder for the Græme ! ”—
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o’er Malcolm’s neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band, 840
And laid the clasp on Ellen’s hand.

Harp of the North, farewell ! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending ;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending. 845

Resume thy wizard elm ! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy ;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel harp ! 851

Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way, 855
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.
That I o'erlived such woes, Enchantress ! is thine own.

Hark ! as my lingering footsteps slow retire, 860

Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string !
'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell, 865
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 'tis silent all !—Enchantress, fare thee well !



Ryddal Vale.

(Neighbourhood of Woodsworth's House at Ryddal Mount.)

WORDSWORTH.

TO MY SISTER.

WRITTEN AT A SMALL DISTANCE FROM MY HOUSE, AND SENT
BY MY LITTLE BOY.

It is the first mild day of March :
Each minute sweeter than before,
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air, 5
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My Sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done, 10
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ; and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day 15
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year. 20

Love, now a universal birth
From heart to heart is stealing ;
From earth to man, from man to earth ;
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more 25
 Than fifty years of reason :
 Our minds shall drink at every pore
 The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
 Which they shall long obey : 30
 We for the year to come may take
 Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
 About, below, above,
 We'll frame the measure of our souls : 35
 They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
 With speed put on your woodland dress ;
 And bring no book : for this one day
 We'll give to idleness. 40

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

“ Why, William, on that old gray stone,
 Thus for the length of half a day—
 Why, William, sit you thus alone
 And dream your time away ?

“ Where are your books, that light bequeathed 5
 To beings else forlorn and blind !
 Up, up ! and drink the spirit breathed
 From dead men to their kind.

“ You look round on your mother Earth
 As if she for no purpose bore you ; 10
 As if you were her first-born birth,
 And none had lived before you.”

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
 When life was sweet, I knew not why.
 To me my good friend Matthew spake, 15
 And thus I made reply :

“ The eye, it cannot choose but see ;
 We cannot bid the ear be still ;
 Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
 Against or with our will. 20

“ Nor less I deem that there are Powers
 Which of themselves our minds impress ;
 That we can feed this mind of ours
 In a wise passiveness.

“ Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum 25
 Of things forever speaking,
 That nothing of itself will come,
 But we must still be seeking ?

—“ Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
 Conversing as I may, 30
 I sit upon this old gray stone,
 And dream my time away.”

THE TABLES TURNED ;

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up, up ! my Friend, and quit your books,
 Or surely you'll grow double ;
 Up, up ! my Friend, and clear your looks ;
 Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head, 5
 A freshening lustre mellow
 Through all the long green fields has spread,
 His first sweet evening yellow.

- Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife ;
 Come, hear the woodland linnet,
 How sweet his music ! on my life,
 There's more of wisdom in it. 10
- And hark ! how blithe the throistle sings !
 He, too, is no mean preacher ;
 Come forth into the light of things,
 Let Nature be your teacher. 15
- She has a world of ready wealth,
 Our minds and hearts to bless—
 Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
 Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20
- One impulse from a vernal wood
 May teach you more of man,
 Of moral evil and of good,
 Than all the sages can.
- Sweet is the lore which Nature brings : 25
 Our meddling intellect
 Misshapes the beauteous forms of things :—
 We murder to dissect.
- Enough of science and of art :
 Close up these barren leaves : 30
 Come forth, and bring with you a heart
 That watches and receives.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION OF
 BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul that art the Eternity of thought,
 And givest to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion ! not in vain,

By day or starlight, thus from my first dawn 5
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul ;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
But with high objects, with enduring things,
With life and nature : purifying thus 10
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying by such discipline
Both pain and fear, until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me 15
With stinted kindness. In November days,
When vapours rolling down the valleys made
A lonely scene more lonesome ; among woods
At noon, and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
When, by the margin of the trembling lake, 20
Beneath the gloomy hills, I homeward went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine :
'Twas mine among the fields both day and night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.
And in the frosty season, when the sun 25
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
The cottage windows through the twilight blazed,
I heeded not the summons : happy time
It was indeed for all of us ; for me
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud 30
The village clock tolled six ; I wheeled about
Proud and exulting, like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel
We hissed along the polished ice, in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase 35
And woodland pleasures—the resounding horn,
The pack loud-bellowing, and the hunted hare,

So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
 And not a voice was idle. With the din
 Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud ; 40
 The leafless trees and every icy crag
 Tinkled like iron ; while the distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars
 Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west 45
 The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng
 To cut across the reflex of a star ; 50
 Image that, flying still before me, gleamed
 Upon the grassy plain ; and oftentimes,
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still 55
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round ! 60
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

NUTTING.

—It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out)—
 One of those heavenly days which cannot die ;
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,

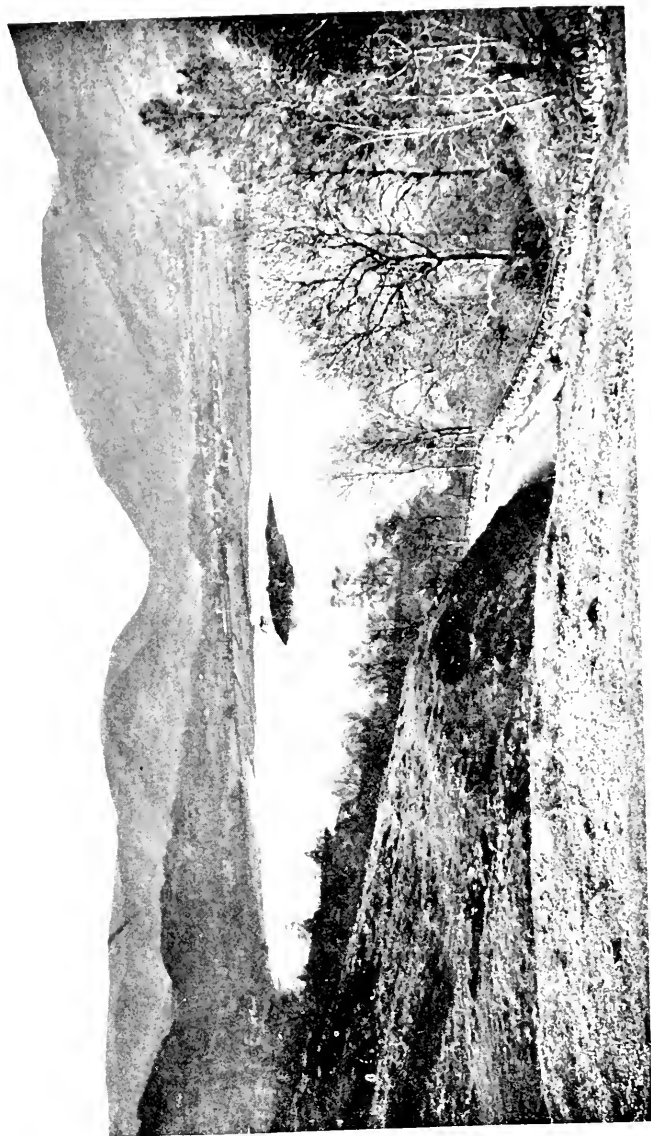
I left our cottage threshold, sallying forth 5
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
A nutting-crook in hand, and turned my steps
Towards the distant woods, a figure quaint,
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been husbanded, 10
By exhortation of my frugal dame ;
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns and brakes and brambles, and, in truth,
More ragged than need was ! Among the woods,
And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my way 15
Until, at length, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation, but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung, 20
A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in : and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet ; or beneath the trees I sate 25
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played ;
A temper known to those who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves 30
The violets of five seasons reappear
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
Forever : and I saw the sparkling foam,
And—with my cheek on one of those green stones 35
That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,

In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
 Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure, 40
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
 Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough with crash
 And merciless ravage ; and the shady nook 45
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
 Their quiet being. And, unless I now
 Confound my present feelings with the past,
 Even then, when from the bower I turned away 50
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
 The silent trees and the intruding sky.
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
 In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand 55
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

If from the public way you turn your steps
 Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
 You will suppose that with an upright path
 Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to face. 5
 But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook
 The mountains have all opened out themselves,
 And made a hidden valley of their own.
 No habitation can be seen ; but they
 Who journey hither find themselves alone 10
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
 That overhead are sailing in the sky,



Grasmere.

It is, in truth, an utter solitude ;
 Nor should I have made mention of this dell
 But for one object which you might pass by, 15
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones ;
 And to that place a story appertains
 Which, though it be ungarnished with events,
 Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside 20
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved :—not, verily,
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills 25
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this tale, while I was yet a boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects led me on to feel 30
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
 An old man, stout of heart and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45

And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
 Of blasts of every tone ; and oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, He heard the South 50
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 " The winds are now devising work for me ! " 55
 And, truly, at all times, the storm—that drives
 The traveller to a shelter—summoned him
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists
 That came to him and left him on the heights. 60
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
 And grossly that man errs who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
 Fields where with cheerful spirits he had breathed 65
 The common air ; the hills which he so oft
 Had climbed with vigorous steps, which had impressed
 So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70
 Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honourable gain—
 Those fields, those hills (what could they less ?), had laid
 Strong hold on his affections ; were to him 75
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His helpmate was a comely matron, old—

Though younger than himself full twenty years. 80
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house. Two wheels she had
Of antique form—this large for spinning wool,
That small for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work. 85
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old—in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son, 90
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone, 95
And from their occupations out-of-doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then
Their labour did not cease ; unless when all
Turned to their cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk, 100
Sat round their basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when their meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ 105
Their hands by the fireside : perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindie, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110
That in our ancient uncouth country style
Did with a huge projection overbrow

Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp—
 An aged utensil, which had performed 115
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn, and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had found,
 And left the couple neither gay, perhaps, 120
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.
 And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
 There by the light of this old lamp they sat,
 Father and Son, while late into the night 125
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
 This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life 130
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake ; 135
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the house itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named The Evening Star.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear—
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Blind spirit which is in the blood of all— 145

Than that a child more than all other gifts
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail.
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him, 150
 His heart and his heart's joy. For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced 155
 To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
 His cradle with a woman's gentle hand.

— And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love—
 Albeit of a stern, unbending mind— 160
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
 Had work by his own door, or when he sat
 With sheep before him on his shepherd's stool,
 Beneath that large old oak which near their door
 Stood, and from its enormous breadth of shade 165
 Chosen for the shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears.
 There, while they two were sitting in the shade
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe, 170
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears. 175

And when, by Heaven's good grace, the boy grew up
 A healthy lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old,

Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped 180
 With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ; 185
 And, to his office prematurely called,
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
 Something between a hindrance and a help ;
 And for this cause not always, I believe,
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ; 190
 Though naught was left undone which staff, or voice,
 Or looks, or threatening gestures could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways, 195
 He with his Father daily went, and they
 Were as companions, why should I relate
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came
 Feelings and emanations—things which were 200
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
 And that the old man's heart seemed born again !

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
 He was his comfort and his daily hope. 205

While in this sort the simple household lived
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
 In surety for his brother's son, a man 210

Of an industrious life and ample means ;
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
 Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture—
 A grievous penalty, but little less 215
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim
 At the first hearing, for a moment took
 More hope out of his life than he supposed
 That any old man ever could have lost.
 As soon as he had gathered so much strength 220
 That he could look his trouble in the face,
 It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell
 A portion of his patrimonial fields.
 Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
 And his heart failed him. “ Isabel,” said he, 225
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,
 “ I have been toiling more than seventy years,
 And in the open sunshine of God’s love
 Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours
 Should pass into a stranger’s hand, I think 230
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man 235
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but
 ’Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus. 240
 When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies, and of a cheerful hope.
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;

He shall possess it, free as is the wind 245
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
Another kinsman ; he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade ; and Luke to him shall go,
And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift 250
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
May come again to us. If here he stay,
What can be done ? Where every one is poor,
What can be gained ?" At this the old man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind 255
Was busy looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
He was a parish-boy ; at the church-door
They made a gathering for him—shillings. pence,
And half-pennies—wherewith the neighbours bought
A basket, which they filled with peddler's wares ; 261
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise 265
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And, at his birthplace, built a chapel floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.
These thoughts, and many others of like sort 270
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old man was glad.
And thus resumed : " Well, Isabel ! this scheme.
These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet, 275
We have enough—I wish, indeed, that I
Were younger,—but this hope is a good hope.
—Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night : 280
 —If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night.”
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
 With a light heart. The housewife for five days
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare 285
 Things needful for the journey of her son.
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work : for when she lay
 By Michael's side, she through the two last nights
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep ; 290
 And when they rose at morning she could see
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
 Were sitting at the door, “Thou must not go :
 We have no other child but thee to lose, 295
 None to remember—do not go away ;
 For if thou leave thy father, he will die.”
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare 300
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared
 As cheerful as a grove in spring : at length 305
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,
 With kind assurances that he would do
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;
 To which requests were added that forthwith
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or more 310
 The letter was read over ; Isabel

Went forth to show it to the neighbours round :
 Nor was there at that time on English land
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
 Had to her house returned, the old man said, 315
 " He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
 The housewife answered, talking much of things
 Which, if at such short notice he should go,
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease. 320

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll
 In that deep valley, Michael had designed
 To build a sheepfold ; and, before he heard
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,
 For this same purpose he had gathered up 325
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he walked ;
 And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
 And thus the old man spake to him : " My son, 330
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part 335
 Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should speak
 Of things thou canst not know of. After thou
 First camest into the world—as oft befalls
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away 340
 Two days, and blessings from thy father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds

Than when I heard thee by our own fireside 345
First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;
When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains ; else I think that thou 350
Hadst been brought up upon thy father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know." 355
Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old man grasped his hand,
And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
—Even to the utmost I have been to thee 360
A kind and a good father. And herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands ; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth. 365
Both of them sleep together. Here they lived,
As all their forefathers had done, and when
At length their time was come, they were not loath
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived. 370
But 'tis a long time to look back, my son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burdened when they came to me,
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine. 375
I toiled and toiled. God blessed me in my work.
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
—It looks as if it never could endure

Another master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good 380
That thou shouldst go." At this the old man paused.
Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
" This was a work for us ; and now, my son,
It is a work for me. But lay one stone - 385
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
Nay, boy, be of good hope ; we both may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ;
I will do mine.—I will begin again 390
With many tasks that were resigned to thee.
Up to the heights and in among the storms
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, boy ! 395
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
With many hopes. It should be so—Yes—yes—
I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
To leave me, Luke ; thou hast been bound to me
Only by links of love. When thou art gone, 400
What will be left to us !—But I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone
As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my son, 405
And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
And God will strengthen thee. Amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
Mayst bear in mind the life thy fathers lived,
Who, being innocent, did for that cause 410
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—
When thou returnest, thou in this place wilt see

A work which is not here—a covenant
’Twill be between us. But whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last, 415
And bear thy memory with me to the ‘grave.’”

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down
And, as his father had requested, laid
The first stone of the sheepfold. At the sight
The old man’s grief broke from him ; to his heart 420
He pressed his son, he kissed him and wept ;
And to the house together they returned.
—Hushed was that house in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell :—with morrow’s dawn the Boy
Began his journey ; and when he had reached 425
The public way, he put on a bold face ;
And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their kinsman come, 430
Of Luke and his well-doing ; and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
“ The prettiest letters that were ever seen.”
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts. 435
So, many months passed on ; and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
Sometimes, when he could find a leisure hour,
He to that valley took his way, and there 440
Wrought at the sheepfold. Meantime Luke began
To slacken in his duty ; and, at length
He in the dissolute city gave himself

To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last 445
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love :
 'Twill make a thing endurable which else
 Would upset the brain or break the heart.
 I have conversed with more than one who well 450
 Remember the old man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still looked up towards the sun, 455
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
 And for the land his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time
 Did he repair to build the fold of which 460
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old man ; and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went
 And never lifted up a single stone. 465

There, by the sheepfold, sometimes was he seen,
 Sitting alone, with that his faithful dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time,
 He at the building of this sheepfold wrought, 470
 And left the work unfinished when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her husband. At her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The cottage which was named The Evening Star 475
 Is gone ; the ploughshare has been through the ground

On which it stood : great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighbourhood ; yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains
 Of the unfinished sheepfold may be seen 480
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

TO THE DAISY.

Bright flower, whose home is everywhere !
 A Pilgrim bold in Nature's care,
 And oft, the long year through, the heir
 Of joy or sorrow,
 Methinks that there abides in thee 5
 Some concord with humanity,
 Given to no other flower I see
 The forest thorough !

And wherefore ? Man is soon deprest ;
 A thoughtless Thing ! who, once unblest, 10
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason ;
 But Thou wouldst teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind 15
 And every season.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS, 1803.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold :
 As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould 5
 Where Burns is laid.

And have I, then, thy bones so near,
 And thou forbidden to appear?
 As if it were thyself that's here
 I shrink with pain ; 10
 And both my wishes and my fear
 Alike are vain.

Off, weight—nor press on weight!—Away,
 Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to stay.
 With chastened feelings would I pay 15
 The tribute due
 To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower whose modest worth
 He sang, his genius “glinted” forth, 20
 Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
 Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow, 25
 The struggling heart, where be they now?—
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
 Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave. 30

Well might I mourn that He was gone,
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
 When breaking forth as Nature's own,
 It showed my youth
 How Verse may build a princely throne 35
 On humble truth.

Alas ! where'er the current tends,
 Regret pursues and with it blends—
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen : 40
 Neighbours we were, and loving friends
 We might have been !

True friends though diversely inclined ;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined, 45
 Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou “poor Inhabitant below,” 50
At this dread moment—even so—
Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed 55
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast !
 But why go on ?—
Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown. 60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died),
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
 Hath early found among the dead,
 Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distrest ; 70
 And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,
 May He who halloweth the place 75
 Where Man is laid
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing, I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell, I heard, or seemed to hear, 80
 Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
 Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

THOUGHTS.

SUGGESTED ON THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF THE
 NITH, NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro, 5
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,
 Over the grave of Burns we hung

In social grief— 10
Indulged as if it were a wrong
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
And prompt to welcome every gleam 15
Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid stream
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight :
Think rather of those moments bright 20
When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,
When wisdom prospered in his sight
And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand, 25
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When side by side, his Book in hand,
We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
Of each sweet Lay. 30

How oft inspired must he have trode
These path-ways, yon far-stretching road !
There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly pensive mood, 35
The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that image overawes,
Before it humbly let us pause.
And ask of Nature from what cause

And by what rules 40
She trained her Burns to win applause
That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen :
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when 45
Bees fill their hives.
Deep in the general heart of men
His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime, 50
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven 55
This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;
The rueful conflict, the heart riven
With vain endeavour,
And memory of Earth's bitter leaven
Effaced forever. 60

But why to Him confine the prayer,
When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
On the frail heart the purest share
With all that live ?
The best of what we do and are, 65
Just God, forgive !

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Behold her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass,
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 Oh, listen ! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
 So sweetly to reposing bands 10
 Of travellers in some shady haunt
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In springtime from the cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago : 20
 Or is it some more humble lay
 Familiar matter of to-day ?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang 25
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;
 I listened till I had my fill ;
 And when I mounted up the hill, 30
 The music in my heart I bore
 Long after it was heard no more.

ODE TO DUTY.

*Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim,
sed nisi recte facere non possim.*

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God !

O Duty ! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove ;
Thou, who art victory and law 5
When empty terrors overawe ;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth, 10
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Glad Hearts, without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work and know it not :
Long may the kindly impulse last ! 15
But Thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand fast !

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security. 20
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed,
Yet seek thy firm support according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ; 25
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust ;

And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ; 35
But in the quietness of thought.
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance desires ;
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds, 45
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend 50
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give, 55
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live !

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM,
PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile !

Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee ;

I saw thee every day, and all the while

Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air ! 5

So like, so very like, was day to day !

Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there ;

It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep ;

No mood which season takes away or brings : 10

I could have fancied that the mighty Deep

Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,

To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,

The light that never was, on sea or land, 15

The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,

Amid a world how different from this !

Beside a sea that could not cease to smile,

On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,

Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;

No motion, but the moving tide, a breeze,

Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart, 25

Such Picture would I at that time have made :

And seen the soul of truth in every part,

A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
 I have submitted to a new control ; 30
 A power is gone which nothing can restore ;
 A deep distress hath humanized my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
 A smiling sea and be what I have been.
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ; 35
 This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend who would have been the
 Friend,
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
 This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
 This sea in anger and that dismal shore. 40

Oh, 'tis a passionate Work—yet wise and well,
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
 That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime, 45
 I love to see the look with which it braves,
 Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
 Housed, in a dream, at distance from the Kind ! 50
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,
 Is to be pitied, for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude and patient cheer,
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.— 55
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be?
 —It is the generous Spirit who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought ; 5
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright ;
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10
 But makes his moral being his prime care ;
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain
 And Fear and Bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 In face of these doth exercise a power 15
 Which is our human nature's highest dower :
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives ;
 By objects which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling rendered more compassionate ; 20
 Is placable —because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice ;
 More skillful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
 As tempted more ; more able to endure
 As more exposed to suffering and distress ; 25
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
 —'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
 Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
 To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30
 And what in quality or act is best
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,

He fixes good on good alone, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
—Who, if he rise to station of command, 35
Rises by open means, and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ; 40
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth or honours, or for worldly state :
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all ;
Whose powers shed round him, in the common strife 45
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for humankind, 50
Is happy as a lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired ;
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
Or if an unexpected call succeed, 55
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes : 60
Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart, and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
'Tis, finally, the Man who, lifted high, 65
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,

Or left unthought of in obscurity,—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70
 Where what he most doth value must be won ;
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last, 75
 From well to better, daily self-surpass ;
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
 Or he must go to dust without his fame,
 And leave a dead, unprofitable name, 80
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
 Whom every man in arms should wish to be. 85

“O NIGHTINGALE, THOU SURELY ART.”

O Nightingale, thou surely art
 A creature of a fiery heart ;—
 These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine 5
 Had helped thee to a Valentine ;
 A song in mockery and despite
 Of shades and dew and silent night,
 And steady bliss, and all the loves
 Now sleeping in these peaceful groves. 10

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
 His homely tale this very day ;
 His voice was buried among trees,
 Yet to be come at by the breeze :
 He did not cease, but cooed—and cooed, 15
 And somewhat pensively he wooed.
 He sang of love, with quiet blending,
 Slow to begin, and never ending ;
 Of serious faith and inward glee :
 That was the song—the song for me ! 20

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND
OTHER POEMS).

The minstrels played their Christmas tune
 To-night beneath my cottage eaves :
 While, smitten by a lofty moon,
 The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
 Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen, 5
 That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
 Had sunk to rest with folded wings ;
 Keen was the air, but could not freeze
 Nor check the music of the strings ; 10
 So stout and hardy were the band
 That scraped the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listened ?—till was paid
 Respect to every Inmate's claim :
 The greeting given, the music played, 15
 In honour of each household name,
 Duly pronounced with lusty call,
 And "Merry Christmas" wished to all !

O Brother ! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills ; 20
And it is given thee to rejoice ;
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet would that Thou, with me and mine, 25
Hadst heard this never-failing rite ;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours ! 30

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds ;
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door 35
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear — and sink again to sleep !
Or, at an earlier call, to mark, 40
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence ;

The mutual nod — the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er ;
And some unbidden tears that rise 45
For names once heard, and heard no more ;
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid !

Ah ! not for emerald fields alone,

With ambient streams more pure and bright 50
Than fabled Cytherea's zone

Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared !

Hail, ancient Manners ! sure defence, 55

Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;
Remnants of love whose modest sense

Thus into narrow room withdraws ;
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, Mountains old ! 60

Bear with me, Brother ; quench the thought

That slights this passion, or condemns ;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought

From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers, 65
To humbler streams and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,

Short leisure even in busiest days,
Moments to cast a look behind,

And profit by those kindly rays 70
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din

Breaks frequent on thy satiate ear,
A pleased attention I may win 75

To agitations less severe,
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
But fill the hollow vale with joy !

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

A Rock there is whose homely front
 The passing traveller slights ;
 Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
 Like stars, at various heights ;
 And one coy Primrose to that Rock 5
 The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
 What kingdoms overthrown,
 Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
 And marked it for my own ; 10
 A lasting link in Nature's chain
 From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
 Their fellowship renew ;
 The stems are faithful to the root, 15
 That worketh out of view ;
 And to the rock the root adheres
 In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
 Though threatening still to fall ; 20
 The earth is constant to her sphere ;
 And God upholds them all :
 So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
 Her annual funeral.

* * * * *

Here closed the meditative strain ; 25
 But air breathed soft that day,
 The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,
 The sunny vale looked gay ;
 And to the Primrose of the Rock
 I gave this after-lay. 30

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
 Like Thee, in field and grove
 Revive unenvied ;—mightier far
 Than tremblings that reprove
 Our vernal tendencies to hope, 35
 Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed—for wan disease,
 For sorrow that had bent
 O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
 Their moral element, 40
 And turned the thistles of a curse
 To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
 The reasoning Sons of Men,
 From one oblivious winter called 45
 Shall rise, and breathe again ;
 And in eternal summer lose
 Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
 This prescience from on high, 50
 The faith that elevates the just,
 Before and when they die ;
 And makes each soul a separate heaven,
 A court for Deity.

“FAIR STAR OF EVENING.”

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE NEAR CALAIS. AUGUST 1802.

Fair Star of Evening, Splendour of the West,
 Star of my country !—on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
 On England's bosom ; yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest 5

Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
 Shouldst be my Country's emblem ; and shouldst wink,
 Bright Star ! with laughter on her banners, drest
 In thy fresh beauty. There ! that dusky spot
 Beneath thee, it is England ; there it lies. 10
 Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory ! I, with many a fear
 For my dear Country, many heart-felt sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

“IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF.”

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which to the open sea
 Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, “with pomp of waters, unwithstood,”
 Roused though it be full often to a mood 5
 Which spurs the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish ; and to evil and to good
 Be lost forever. In our halls is hung
 Armory of the invincible knights of old ; 10
 We must be free or die who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake ; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held —In everything we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

“IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING.”

COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS, 1802.

It is a beauteous Evening, calm and free ;
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven is on the sea. 5

Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought, 10
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine.
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

 PERSONAL TALK.

I am not One who much or oft delight
 To season my fireside with personal talk,—
 Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
 Or neighbours daily, weekly, in my sight ;
 And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright, 5
 Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
 These all wear out of me, like forms with chalk
 Painted on rich men's floors for one feast-night.
 Better than such discourse doth silence long,
 Long, barren silence, square with my desire ; 10
 To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
 In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
 And listen to the flapping of the flame,
 Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

CONTINUED.

Wings have we,— and as far as we can go
 We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
 Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
 Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good : 6

Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
 Matter wherein right voluble I am, 10
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear—
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
 And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

CONCLUDED.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I 5
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought.
 And thus from day to day my little boat
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares— 10
 The Poets who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide,
 As being passed away.—Vain sympathies !
 For backward, Duddon, as I cast my eyes,
 I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
 Still glides the Stream, and shall not cease to glide ; 5
 The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,



Windermere by Moonlight

We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
 The elements, must vanish ; be it so !
 Enough, if something from our hands have power 10
 To live and act and serve the future hour ;
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
 Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
 dower,
 We feel that we are greater than we know.

“SCORN NOT THE SONNET.”

Scorn not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,
 Mindless of its just honours ; with this key
 Shakspeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound :
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ; 5
 Camoëns soothed with it an exile's grief ;
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
 His visionary brow ; a glowworm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land 10
 To struggle through dark ways ; and when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
 The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
 Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !

SONNET

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD,
 FOR NAPLES.

A trouble, not of clouds or weeping rain,
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height.

Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
 For kindred Power departing from their sight ; 5
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
 Saddens his voice again and yet again.
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the might
 Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes ;
 Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue 10
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
 Ye winds of ocean and the midland sea,
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !

“ *A POET!*—HE HATH PUT HIS HEART TO
SCHOOL.”

A Poet!—He hath put his heart to school,
 Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
 Which Art hath lodged within his hand—must laugh
 By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
 Thy Art be Nature ; the live current quaff, 5
 And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
 In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
 Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.
 How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold ?
 Because the lovely little flower is free 10
 Down to its root, and in that freedom bold ;
 And so the grandeur of the Forest tree
 Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
 But from its *own* divine vitality.

NOTES.

NOTES.

SCOTT.

WALTER SCOTT was an almost exact contemporary of Wordsworth, and like him was a great force in the poetic movement which covers the later part of the 18th and the earlier part of the 19th century. These two men, however, unlike in character and manner of life, developed different elements of that movement.

The thought of the 18th century had been marked by a preference for general principles as compared with concrete facts, and by a proneness to neglect all that cannot be clearly and rationally accounted for; the province of the half-known and vaguely surmised was overlooked. This tendency in thought was accompanied by a parallel tendency in form; what was chiefly aimed at in the style both of prose and poetry, was clearness, elegance, and polish. The consequence of the prevalent bent was the predominance of dry intellect, the expression of feeling was checked, and imagination was neglected; while in the matter of style, that vague suggestiveness and sensuous beauty so characteristic of poetry was considered of minor importance as compared with clearness and rhetorical effectiveness. Busy as these generations were in getting their ideas clarified and arranged, breadth, and the study of the literature of other times were neglected. An exception was made in the case of classical, more especially of Latin, literature, which exhibited a kindred spirit and form. On the other hand, the middle ages were regarded with contempt, and the later writers of Elizabethan times treated with an air of patronizing superiority. The love of mysticism in mediæval literature,—of the supernatural and inexplicable, its fondness for mere adventure and picturesque detail, its lack of form, alienated the interest of this less simple age; whilst the rationality, the worldliness, and finished style of the Latin literature of the Augustan period were sources of attraction. Against the narrow rationalism which we have described, there set in an inevitable reaction; thought and art began to broaden in various directions. We may see, in the case of Wordsworth, how poetry became more comprehensive, and gathered into its sphere the persons and incidents of commonplace, and, what the 18th century would have called, low and vulgar, life. There was a broadening in other directions, for example, an awakening of interest in the past; the first great historians appeared in English literature, Gibbon, Hume, and Robertson. The middle ages, especially, attracted by those very qualities in virtue

of which they had formerly repelled. The quickened delight in the play of imagination and fancy, found endless food in mediæval literature and Gothic art; and, in its exaggerated manifestations, took a childish interest in ghost stories, in the horrible, in all that stimulated the feelings. In poetry, the new tendency turned from the abstract intellectual, or unromantic themes of the 18th century—from the *Essay on Man*, and the *Essay on Criticism*, from *The Rape of the Lock*, and from satire—to what appealed to the eye and imagination, to the picturesque, to records of action and adventure. The new spirit signalized itself in many ways,—in the publication of Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765), and of the *Poems of Ossian*, in the development of the historic novel, beginning with Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1763), in the taste for Gothic architecture, and for natural landscape-gardening as opposed to the formal Dutch style. This tendency, as far as imaginative literature goes, culminated in the work of Scott; and as we study the man and his circumstances, we see how temperament, antecedents, and surroundings all contributed to make him the great exponent of the historic, romantic, and picturesque.

In the first place, Scott himself grew up when this tendency was in the air, and when writers of inferior genius were making experiments in the direction which he was to follow. In the next place, he was a Scotchman; and Scotland had preserved remnants of earlier social conditions longer than any other part of the United Kingdom. This was especially true of the Highlands and the Borders: with the former, circumstances and tastes made Scott early familiar; with the latter, he was connected by the closest ties. Again, the scenery of Scotland was fitted to nourish the romantic sentiment, for even nature has her romantic and her classic aspects. The finished and orderly appearance of a fertile and cultivated country in a bright southern atmosphere is likely to charm the taste that appreciates the definiteness and perfection of classic art. Whereas the wild and rugged aspect of a bleak, mountainous country like Scotland, the dark glens, the desolate moors, half perceived through the veil of mist, have the mystery and suggestiveness of romantic art. Even Edinburgh, with which, next to the Borders, Scott's life was most associated, is not only most romantic in its natural features, but even in its artificial characteristics preserved, in Scott's youth, Gothic and feudal elements beyond any other city in the island. By family history, too, Scott was linked with the historic past. He was descended from a prominent Border family, the Scotts of Harden. Auld Watt, of Harden, of whom Border story had much

to tell, was an ancestor of his. "I am therefore lineally descended," he says, in his autobiographic sketch, "from that ancient chieftain, whose name I have made ring in many a ditty, and from his fair dame, the Flower of Yarrow,—no bad genealogy for a Border minstrel."

Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh, Aug. 15th, 1771. In early life he was somewhat delicate, and contracted a slight but permanent lameness. For the sake of health he was sent to live with his paternal grandfather, who held the farm of Sandy Knowe, in the very midst of scenes memorable in Border story. Here the child awakened into consciousness, and here, before he could read, the first literary impression was made on his mind through learning by heart the old ballad of *Hardicanute*. After passing through the Edinburgh High School, his health again failed, and he was sent to recruit at Kelso, the most beautiful village in Scotland (as he himself tells us) surrounded by "objects not only grand in themselves, but venerable from their association." "The romantic feelings," he continues, "which I have described as predominating in my mind, naturally rested upon and associated themselves with these grand features of the landscape around me; and the historical incidents, or traditional legends connected with many of them, gave to my admiration a sort of intense impression of reverence, which at times made my heart feel too big for its bosom. From this time the love of natural beauty, more especially when combined with ancient ruins, or remains of our fathers' piety or splendour, became with me an insatiable passion." At this date his appetite for reading was great, and his favourite books show his natural taste and served to develop it. Among these were the romantic poems of Spenser and Tasso; but first in his affections was Percy's collection of old ballads, "nor do I believe," he says, "that I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."

He now entered classes in the university, and when about fifteen years old became an apprentice to his father, who was a Writer to the Signet, a profession which corresponds nearly to that of solicitor. But it was not on legal pursuits that his interests were centred. He and a friend would spend whole holidays wandering in the most solitary spots about Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crag, composing romances in which the martial and miraculous always predominated. When opportunity permitted he delighted to make longer pedestrian excursions, for "the pleasure of seeing romantic scenery, or what afforded me at least equal pleasure, the places which had been distinguished by remarkable historic events." Some business led him to

penetrate even the Highlands—a rare thing in those days,—and repeated visits made him familiar not merely with the beautiful scenery, but with the remnants of picturesque and primitive manners and customs. As he grew to maturity, he mingled freely with the world and became intimate with a brilliant circle of young men of his own age. In 1792 he was called to the bar; and—an event, perhaps, of not much less import in his life—in the same year made his first expedition into Liddesdale, one of the most inaccessible parts of the Border country. “During seven successive years Scott made a raid, as he called it, into Liddesdale, with Mr. Shortreed for his guide, exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district—the first, indeed, that ever appeared there was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn nor public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd’s hut to the minister’s manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead, gathering wherever they went songs and tunes, and occasionally some tangible relics of antiquity. . . . To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his ‘Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,’ and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of his prose works.” (Lockhart’s *Life*.) He began to study German; the results are shown in the translation from that language of some romantic ballads, and of Goethe’s *Goetz von Berlichingen*, a dramatic picture of mediæval baronial life on the Rhine. These were his first published ventures in literature.

In 1797 Scott married, and this made the successful prosecution of his profession a matter of greater importance than before; but his heart was not in his barrister work, and his income from it was neither large nor likely to increase greatly. At the close of 1799, he gladly accepted the office of sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire, which was obtained for him by the influence of the head of his clan, the Duke of Buccleuch. This post not only brought a small but assured income of £300 with very light duties, but also, what Scott prized greatly, gave him another connection with the Borders. He now threw himself enthusiastically into the preparation of a collection of border ballads. Two volumes appeared in 1802, and were well received. While engaged upon the third volume, he began an imitation of an old ballad romance—a work which proved so congenial to him that it developed into a long poem,

The Lay of the Last Minstrel. It was published in January, 1805, and had a success which had never been equalled in the history of English poetry. It was a poem at once of a most novel, attractive, and popular character. Its reception decided that literature was to be the main business of its writer's life. At about the same time Scott entered into partnership with the Ballantynes in the printing business, but this partnership was kept a profound secret. During the ten years which followed the publication of the *Lay*, Scott wrote his longer poems; the most important of these were *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810. The large returns which his works brought him as author and as publisher, encouraged him to become a landed proprietor. In 1811 he made the first purchase of what by gradual additions came to be the considerable estate of Abbotsford, situated in the midst of his favourite border country. He found the keenest pleasure in realizing here a "romance in brick and mortar," in planting trees, and in all the duties and pleasures of a country gentleman. It was his dream to found a family, and to hand down an entailed estate to remote posterity. In 1813 the Ballantyne firm were greatly embarrassed, but weathered the storm by the assistance of the publisher Constable. Meantime, when the need of money was becoming more pressing, Scott's popularity as a poet was on the decline; his later works were not equal to the three earliest, already mentioned, and Byron was surpassing him in popular estimation in the very species of poetry which he had introduced. Scott, whose estimate of his own power and works was always modest to excess, acknowledged Byron's superiority, and began to look about for some new field for the exercise of his literary skill. He had already in 1805 begun writing a prose romance which he had laid aside in deference to the unfavourable opinions of some friends to whom he had submitted it. This he now resumed; it was completed and published anonymously in 1814 under the title of *Waverley*. Its success was no less extraordinary than that of the *Lay*. Scott as a poet ranked high in a generation of great poets, but in romance he is beyond comparison. "All is great in the Waverley novels," said Goethe, "material, effect, characters, execution." "What infinite diligence in the preparatory studies," he exclaimed, "what truth of detail in execution."

The rapidity of Scott's production, especially when we consider the high level of excellence, is astonishing. In less than three years he produced four masterpieces: *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Anti-quary*, and *Old Mortality*. From 1814 to 1829 he wrote twenty-three novels besides shorter tales, and a large amount of literary work of a

different character. Scott, like Byron, is one of the few English authors who was speedily and widely popular throughout Europe. Abbotsford became a centre for pilgrims from many lands, apart from being the resort of numerous visitors drawn thither by closer and more personal ties. Scott amidst all his work, literary and legal (for he held a permanent position as clerk of Session), found time to play the hospitable host, to attend to his plantations and the other affairs of his estate, to indulge in country sports, to mingle freely in society when in Edinburgh, where he spent a portion of each year, and to take a prominent part as a citizen in many matters of public interest. No man worked harder or accomplished more, and no man in his leisure hours threw himself with more hearty zest into his amusements.

A visitor to Abbotsford in 1823 thus records his impressions: "I had seen Sir Walter Scott, but never met him in society before this visit. He received me with all his well-known cordiality and simplicity of manner. . . . I have since been present at his first reception of many visitors, and upon such occasions, as indeed upon every other, I never saw a man who, in his intercourse with all persons, was so perfect a master of courtesy. His manners were so plain and natural, and his kindness took such immediate possession of the feelings, that this excellence in him might for a while pass unobserved. . . . His air and aspect, at the moment of a first introduction, were placid, modest, and for his time of life, venerable. Occasionally, when he stood a little on ceremony, he threw into his address a deferential tone, which had in it something of old-fashioned politeness, and became him extremely well. A point of hospitality in which Sir Walter Scott never failed, whatever might be the pretensions of the guests, was to do the honours of conversation. When a stranger arrived, he seemed to consider it as much a duty to offer him the resources of his mind as those of his table; taking care, however, by his choice of subjects, to give the visitor an opportunity of making his own stores, if he had them, available. . . . It would be extremely difficult to give a just idea of his general conversation to any one who had not known him. Considering his great personal and literary popularity, and the wide circle in which he had lived, it is perhaps remarkable that so few of his sayings, real or imputed, are in circulation. But he did not affect sayings; the points and sententious turns, which are so easily caught up and transmitted, were not natural to him; though he occasionally expressed a thought very prettily and neatly. . . . But the great charm of his 'table-talk' was in the sweetness and *abandon* with

which it flowed,—always, however, guided by good sense and good taste; the warm and unstudied eloquence with which he expressed rather sentiments than opinions; and the liveliness and force with which he narrated and described; and all he spoke derived so much of its effect from indefinable felicities of manner, look, and tone—and sometimes from the choice of apparently insignificant words—that a moderately faithful transcript of his sentences would be but a faint image of his conversation. . . . Not only was he inexhaustible in anecdote, but he loved to exert the talent of dramatizing, and in some measure representing in his own person the incidents he told of, or the situations he imagined. . . . No one who has seen him can forget the surprising power of change which his countenance showed when awakened from a state of composure. In 1823, when I first knew him, the hair on his forehead was quite grey, but his face, which was healthy and sanguine, and the hair about it; which had still a strong reddish tinge, contrasted, rather than harmonized with the sleek, silvery locks above; a contrast which might seem rather suited to a jovial and humorous, than to a pathetic expression. But his features were equally capable of both. The form and hue of his eyes were wonderfully calculated for showing great varieties of emotion. Their mournful aspect was extremely earnest and affecting; and, when he told some dismal and mysterious story, they had a doubtful, melancholy, exploring look, which appealed irresistibly to the hearer's imagination. Occasionally, when he spoke of something very audacious or eccentric, they would dilate and light up with a tragic-comic, harebrained expression, quite peculiar to himself. Never, perhaps, did a man go through all the gradations of laughter with such complete enjoyment, and a countenance so radiant. The first dawn of a luminous thought would show itself sometimes, as he sat silent, by an involuntary lengthening of the upper lip, followed by a shy side-long glance at his neighbours, indescribably whimsical, and seeming to ask from their looks whether the spark of drollery should be suppressed or allowed to blaze out. In the full tide of mirth, he did indeed 'laugh the heart's laugh,' like Walpole, but it was not boisterous and overpowering, nor did it check the course of his words." To these notes we may add some of Lockhart's in regard to a little expedition which Sir Walter and he made in the same year (1823) to the upper regions of the Tweed and Clyde. "Nothing could induce him to remain in the carriage when we approached any celebrated edifice. If he had never seen it before, his curiosity was like that of an eager stripling; if he had examined it fifty times, he must renew his familiarity, and gratify the tenderness of

grateful reminiscences. While on the road his conversation never flagged—story suggested story, and ballad came upon ballad in endless succession. But what struck me most was the apparently omnivorous grasp of his memory. That he should recollect every stanza of any ancient ditty of chivalry or romances that had once excited his imagination, could no longer surprise me ; but it seemed as if he remembered everything without exception, so it were in anything like the shape of a verse, that he had ever read.”

Scott's relations with his fellow-men were of the most genial character—indeed, we may say, with his fellow-creatures ; for dumb animals had an instinctive fondness for him, and he lived almost on terms of friendship with his dogs. In the company of children he delighted. He won the attachment of his own servants and of the peasantry of his district. He gave even too much of his time and of his money to help his friends. There was no pettiness, no grudging jealousy in his relations with his literary contemporaries. No man was more sincerely modest about his own ability and works, or more generous in his praise of others. With Wordsworth, with Byron, his successful rival in poetry, he was on the most friendly terms. “He had an open nature,” says Palgrave, “which is the most charming of all charms ; was wholly free from the folly of fastidiousness ; *had* real dignity, and hence never stood upon it ; talked to all he met, and lived as friend with friend among his servants and followers. ‘Sir Walter speaks to every man,’ one of them said, ‘as if they were blood-relations.’” “Few men,” he himself writes, “have enjoyed society more, or been *bored*, as it is called, less, by the company of tiresome people. I have rarely, if ever, found any one out of whom I could not extract amusement and edification. Still, however, from the earliest time I can remember, I preferred the pleasure of being alone to wishing for visitors.” “God bless thee, Walter, my man !” said his old uncle, “thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.”

Scott's character was submitted, without apparent deterioration, to what is considered the most severe of all tests—the test of long and extraordinarily brilliant prosperity. It was now to be tried by adverse fortune, which only served to bring to the surface some of the finer and more heroic qualities that lay in his sound and wholesome nature. In 1826, at a time of widespread commercial disaster, the house of Ballantyne failed, with obligations amounting to £117,000, due partly to Scott's lavish expenditure, but mainly to the lack of business ability in the avowed members of the firm. Instead of taking advantage of bankruptcy, Scott set himself resolutely to work to pay off this immense sum. His lavish

style of living was reduced to the most modest expenditure ; his habits of life were changed that he might devote himself unremittingly to his great task. In two years, between January 1826 and January 1828, he earned nearly £40,000 for his creditors. By the close of 1830 he had lessened the indebtedness of Ballantyne & Co. by £63,000, and had his health been continued a few years longer, he would doubtless have accomplished his undertaking. But before he was fifty, his constitution had already given signs of being seriously impaired, doubtless the result of too continuous application ; in 1819 his life had been for a time in danger, and from this date he was physically an old man. It was inevitable that the prodigious exertions which he put forth after the bankruptcy should tell upon his strength. There were besides worry and nervous tension of various kinds. His wife died ; sadness and sorrow in various forms gathered about him. Symptoms of paralysis became apparent ; his mind, as he himself felt, no longer worked in the old fashion. "I have suffered terribly, that is the truth," he writes in his diary, May 1831, "rather in body than in mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." As the disease of the brain made progress he was seized with the happy illusion that he had paid all his debts. After an unsuccessful attempt to improve his health by a voyage to Italy, he returned, to die, Sept. 21st, 1832, in his own Abbotsford, amidst the scenes which he knew and loved so well. In 1847, the object he so manfully struggled for was attained. From the proceeds of his works, his life insurance, and the copyright of his *Life* which his biographer and son-in-law, Lockhart, generously devoted to this purpose, the debts were paid in full, and the estate of Abbotsford left free of incumbrance ; but his ambition to found a family was not realized ; the male line became extinct not many years after Sir Walter's death, and the estate of Abbotsford fell to a great granddaughter—his only surviving descendant.

It is impossible within the limits of this brief sketch to give any adequate idea of Scott's varied and active life, and of the many ways in which he came into contact with men and things. But it is sufficiently evident that he was no recluse like Wordsworth, that his temperament was not one which led him to think profoundly, to search out the inner meanings and less obvious aspects of things, or to brood over his own moods and feelings. He found happiness in activity and in social life. Though a literary man, and, from childhood, a great reader, he was not prone, as bookish people often are, to over-estimate

the importance of literature. He prided himself first of all on being a man,—a citizen and a gentleman. Scott mingled with the world, looked upon it and was interested in it much as the ordinary man; only his horizon was broader, his interest keener, and his sympathy wider. He cared no more than the average man for abstract generalizations or for scientific analysis. He liked what the multitude like, what appeals to eye and ear,—incidents, persons, the striking and unusual. We have all a natural interest in men and their doings, an interest which is the basis of the universal taste for gossip. And it is this panorama of human life—men and women and the movement of events with which Homer and the ballad singers delighted their unsophisticated audiences. This is also the theme of Scott's works. They do not chiefly represent the writer's reflections, his feelings, or his moods; but they picture the *spectacle* of life as seen from the outside with a breadth and vivacity unsurpassed in our literature except by Shakespeare alone.

The particular *kind* of life and character which Scott presents, is determined by his tastes and temperament. The interest in the past was extraordinarily strong in Scott. He was an antiquarian before he thought of being a poet. But he was not a pure antiquarian. He was not stimulated to the study of antiquity merely by the desire of truth. His interest was based on feeling,—on the feeling for kin, for example, so strongly developed in the typical Scotch character, and on the love of country. From the antiquarian he differed in another way,—in a way which showed that he was really first of all a poet. He desired his antiquarian facts, not for their own sake, but as elements out of which his imagination might picturesquely reconstruct the life of past generations. In *Waverley*, Scott himself clearly indicates the distinction here emphasized. Comparing Waverley's interest in the past with the Baron of Bradwardine's, he writes: "The Baron, indeed, only cumbered his memory with matters of fact; the cold, hard, dry outlines which history delineates. Edward, on the contrary, loved to fill up and round the sketch with the colouring of a warm and vivid imagination, which gives light and life to the actors and speakers in the drama of past ages." It was with the past, and more particularly with the past of his own country, that Scott's imagination delighted to busy itself. Since this sort of theme had been neglected in the classical 18th century period, and had been but feebly treated by such recent writers as Mrs. Radcliffe, Scott had,—a very important matter for a writer—a fresh and novel field. To this domain his novels and poems mainly belong.

When we speak of an historic novel or poem, we naturally think, first of all, of one which treats of a period remote from the writer. It will be noted, however, that some of Scott's very best novels treat of periods scarcely more remote than, for example, certain of George Eliot's, to which we would not think of applying the epithet historic. But to these novels of Scott, and to most of his novels, the epithet historic is applicable for a profounder reason than that they present the life of a remote time. History deals not merely with the past, but with the present; but whether treating of present or past, it deals with wide movements, with what affects men in masses,—not with the life of individuals except in as far as they influence the larger body. In this sense Scott's novels are historic. They treat, doubtless, the fortunes of individuals, but nearly always as connected with some great movement of which the historian of the period would have to give an account—as, for example, *Waverley*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*. In this respect he differs from the majority of novelists,—from his own great contemporary, Jane Austen, from Fielding, and from Thackeray. “The most striking feature of Scott's romances,” says Mr. Hutton, “is that, for the most part, they are pivoted on public rather than mere private interests or passions. With but few exceptions—(*The Antiquary*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Guy Mannering* are the most important)—Scott's novels give us an imaginative view, not of mere individuals, but of individuals as they are affected by the public strifes and social divisions of the age. And this it is which gives his books so large an interest for old and young, soldiers and statesmen, the world of society and the recluse, alike. You can hardly read any novel of Scott's and not become better aware what public life and political issues mean. . . . The domestic novel when really of the highest kind, is no doubt a perfect work of art, and an unfailing source of amusement; but it has nothing of the tonic influence, the large instructiveness, the stimulating intellectual air, of Scott's historic tales. Even when Scott is farthest from reality—as in *Ivanhoe* or *The Monastery*—he makes you open your eyes to all sorts of historic conditions to which you would otherwise be blind.”

Scott's imagination was stimulated by the picturesque past, and from childhood onwards, his main interests and favourite pursuits were such as stored his inventive mind with facts, scenes, legends, anecdotes which he might use in embodying this past in artistic forms. He wrote his novels with extraordinary rapidity, yet Goethe's exclamation, “What infinite diligence in preparatory studies,” is amply justified. All this

fund of antiquarian knowledge afforded, however, only the outside garb which, if his work was to have real worth, must clothe real human nature, which is the same now as it was in the past. It is this power of representing human nature that makes his works truly great; and this human nature he learned from life about him. His best characters, his Dandie Dinmonts, and Edie Ochiltrees, his Bailie Nicol Jarvis, his James I., and Elizabeth, are great in virtue of their presenting types of character which belong to all time. It must follow, then, that Scott could depict men and women of his own day, as well as of the past; and this is true, only they must be men and women of a striking and picturesque kind, such as are apt to vanish amidst uniformity and conventions of modern society, but such as Scott found in his rambles in isolated districts. "Scott needed a certain largeness of type, a strongly-marked class-life, and, where it was possible, a free, out-of-doors life, for his delineations. No one could paint beggars and gypsies, and wandering fiddlers, and mercenary soldiers, and peasants and farmers, and lawyers, and magistrates, and preachers, and courtiers, and statesmen, and best of all perhaps, queens and kings, with anything like his ability. But when it came to describing the small differences of manner, differences not due to external habits, so much as to internal sentiment or education, or mere domestic circumstance, he was beyond his proper field." (Hutton's *Scott*.) Scott's genius was broad and vigorous, not intense, subtle and profound. If the common-place in life or character is to interest, it must be by the new light which profound insight, or subtle discrimination throws upon them.

When we pass to the examination of Scott's style, we naturally find analogous peculiarities to those presented by his matter. The general effects produced by his workmanship are excellent; but when we examine minutely, when we dwell upon particular passages or lines, we find it somewhat rough and ready. This defect is a much more serious one in poetry than in prose. The elaborate form of poetry leads us to expect some special felicity or concentration of thought, a nicety in selection of words and imagery that would be superfluous in prose; and these things we do find in the greatest poets. But it is only occasionally in Scott that we stop to dwell on some line or phrase which seems absolutely the best for the purpose. We do not find in him "the magic use of words as distinguished from the mere general effect of vigour, purity, and concentration of purpose." He affords extraordinarily few popular quotations, especially considering the vogue that his poems

have had. In this respect he differs markedly from Wordsworth. "I am sensible," he himself says, "that if there is anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active dispositions." Besides this peculiarity, which is so injurious to his poetry, and scarcely affects his novels, Scott is inferior in his poems because they do not exhibit the full breadth of his genius. Many of his best scenes and characters are of a homely character which is not fitted for poetic expression. Shakespeare could not have adequately represented Falstaff or Dogberry in a narrative poem.

But if Scott's poetry has limitations and defects when compared with the work of his great contemporaries, or even with his own work in the sphere of prose, it possesses rare and conspicuous merits. These are set forth by Palgrave in a passage which may be quoted: "Scott's incompleteness of style, which is more injurious to poetry than to prose, his 'careless glance and reckless rhyme,' has been alleged by a great writer of our time as one reason why he is now less popular as a poet than he was in his own day, when from two to three thousand copies of his metrical romances were freely sold. Beside these faults, which are visible almost everywhere, the charge that he wants depth and penetrative insight has been often brought. He does not 'wrestle with the mystery of existence,' it is said; he does not try to solve the problems of human life. Scott, could he have foreseen this criticism, would probably not have been very careful to answer it. He might have allowed its correctness, and said that one man might have this work to do, but his was another. High and enduring pleasure, however conveyed, is the end of poetry. 'Othello' gives this by its profound display of tragic passion; 'Paradise Lost' gives it by its religious sublimity; 'Childe Harold' by its meditative picturesqueness; the 'Lay' by its brilliant delineation of ancient life and manners. These are but scanty samples of the vast range of poetry. In that house are many mansions. All poets may be seers and teachers; but some teach directly, others by a less ostensible and larger process. Scott never lays bare the workings of his mind, like Goethe or Shelley; he does not draw out the moral of the landscape, like Wordsworth; rather after the fashion of Homer and the writers of the ages before criticism, he presents a scene, and leaves it to work its own effect upon the reader. His most perfect and lovely poems, the short songs which occur scattered through the metrical or the prose narratives, are excellent instances. He is the most unselfconscious of our modern poets, perhaps of all our poets; the difference in this respect

between him and his friends Byron and Wordsworth is like a difference of centuries. If they give us the inner spirit of modern life, or of nature, enter into our perplexities, or probe our deeper passions, Scott has a dramatic faculty not less delightful and precious. He hence attained eminent success in one of the rarest and most difficult aims of Poetry,—sustained vigour, clearness and interest in narration. If we reckon up the poets of the world, we may be surprised to find how very few (dramatists not included) have accomplished this, and may be hence led to estimate Scott's rank in his art more justly. One looks through the English poetry of the first half of the century in vain, unless it be here and there indicated in Keats, for such a power of vividly throwing himself into others as that of Scott. His contemporaries, Crabbe excepted, paint emotions. He paints men when strongly moved. They draw the moral, but he can invent the fable. It would be rash to try to strike a balance between men, each so great in his own way; the picture of one could not be painted with the other's palette; all are first rate in their kind; and every reader can choose the style which gives him the highest, healthiest and most lasting pleasure."

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THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

Publication.—To this poem Scott prefixed the following:

"*Argument.*—The scene of the following poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto."

The Lady of the Lake was begun in 1809; in the summer of that year Scott visited the scene of his story, with which his juvenile rambles had long ago made him familiar, and there the first canto was completed. In the following May the poem was published. "I do not recollect," says a contemporary, Mr. Robert Cadell, "that any of all the author's works was ever looked for with more intense

anxiety, or that any one of them excited a more extraordinary sensation when it did appear. The whole country rang with the praises of the poet—crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the season for excursions, every house and inn in that neighbourhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors. It is a well ascertained fact, that from the date of the publication of the *Lady of the Lake*, the post-horse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree, and indeed it continued to do so regularly for a number of years, the author's succeeding works keeping up the enthusiasm for our scenery which he had thus originally created.* Lockhart states that “in the space of a few months the extraordinary number of 20,000 copies were disposed of.” Long after, to the edition of 1830, Scott prefixed the following introduction, which gives the history of the composition of the poem:

Scott's Introduction.—“After the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odyssey*:—

Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάτος ἐκτετελεσται·
 Νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον. *Odys.* χ. 5.

One venturous game my hand has won to-day—
 Another, gallants, yet remains to play.

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honourable foe. The Poems of Ossian had by their popularity sufficiently shown that, if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

* “And yet the very common impression that in this poem and his subsequent novels the ‘Great Magician’ originally created the romantic interest in Scotland, is not quite accurate. He did not so much create this interest as popularize it. It had grown up slowly among literary people in the course of the century, and Scott gave it a sudden and wide expansion. Even Loch Katrine had been discovered by the tourist in search of the picturesque many years before Scott made one of its beautiful islands the retreat of his heroine and her exiled father.” (Minto's Introduction, p. 13.)

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more, of that romantic country where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labour of love, and it was no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady, to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me, what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. ‘Do not be so rash,’ she said, ‘my dearest cousin. You are already popular,--more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high.--do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity.’ I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose,--

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all.

‘If I fall,’ I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, ‘it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life: you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed,

Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk, and the feather, and a’!

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, although I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste

and unbiased friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retraction of the unfavourable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to affect that change of opinion. In such cases, affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favourable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to 'heeze up my hope,' like the 'sportsman with his cutty gun,' in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashestiel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*, in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favourable a representative of readers at large. It is of course to be supposed that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of revery which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Ninrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. Another of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the King with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants. He was probably thinking of the lively, but somewhat licentious, old ballad, in which the *dénouement* of a royal intrigue takes place as follows :

He took a bugle frae his side,
 He blew both loud and shrill,
 And four and twenty belted knights
 Came skipping ower the hill ;
 Then he took out a little knife,
 Let a' his ducklies fa',
 And he was the brawest gentleman
 That was amang them a'.
 And we'll go no more a roving, etc.

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me ; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect, with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a ' trot for the avenue.'

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale, I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June, 1810 ; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favours for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful, or so superabundantly candid, as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me, which I could not have claimed from merit ; and I endeavoured to deserve the partiality, by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion ; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labour that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise ; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection that, if posterity should think me

undeserving of the favour with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, 'they could not but say I *had* the crown,' and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice, rather than the judgment, of the public, had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Robbery*, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say that, during my short pre-eminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is as sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as school boys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering that they are in such cases apt to explode in the handling. Let me add, that my reign* (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power; and I had the advantage, rather an uncommon one with our irritable race, to enjoy general favour without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

W. S."

"ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830."

* 'Sir Walter reigned before me,' etc. (*Don Juan*, xi, 57).

Prominent Characteristics of the Poem. *The Lady of the Lake* very fully illustrates the characteristics and limitations of Scott's poetry, as sketched on pp. 224-226 of the preceding introduction. We have, as its substantial basis,—the most universally felt source of literary interest, a *story*—that which in literature appeals to the childish mind as to the mature, to the unlearned as to the critical. The story possesses the primitive and fundamental attractions of mystery (in regard to Fitz-James and Douglas), of tangled love episodes (Ellen Douglas and her three suitors), and of marvellous and varied incidents. “The romantic interest never flags from the moment that the adventurous Huntsman enters the dark delf of the Trosachs and sounds his horn on the strand of Loch Katrine to the mortal combat at Coilantogle Ford. From that point it becomes less intense ; but still it holds us till the king's quarrel with the haughty Douglas is appeased, and reasons of state give way before the happiness of two lovers.” (Minto.) While, however, there is sufficient of plot to awaken and maintain the reader's curiosity, this factor is not the chief one in the story. It is the romance, the variety, and the brilliancy of the incidents themselves that charm the reader, rather than their function in developing the plot. We feel that each, in itself, is a sufficient reason for its own existence, although some of them—such as the sending of the Fiery Cross, or the account of the battle of Beal'an Duine—are developed beyond what the requirements of plot-unity justify. But this is not a serious criticism, provided that these less necessary portions neither break the thread of interest nor seem tedious in themselves. One reason for the fullness with which these subordinate details are given, is the fact that both poet and reader have a natural delight in the pictures of scenes and social conditions so unlike those of their own life,—romantic, yet, in a measure at least, representing things as they once actually existed. This is the historic element which bulks so largely in Scott's mental and imaginative life, and is so universally present in his works.

History in the Poem.—Scott, as every true artist must, treats his history with great freedom. He gives here, as in the *Lay*, a general picture (highly idealized to be sure) of society as existing at one time in certain localities ; but the personages and details are in the main the creations of his own fancy, though modelled after or based upon some of those actual traditions with which the poet's mind was so amply stored. Many of these traditions Scott cites in his notes—for the most part reproduced in this edition,—and the reader may compare, for himself, the poet's developed sketch with the original material. “He left him-

self great freedom in the invention of persons and incidents true in kind or species to the period chosen. The Lowland kings all along had great difficulties with their Highland neighbours. This long-standing historical enmity is embodied in Roderick Dhu and Clan Alpine. But the chief is an imaginary chief, and even the clan is an imaginary clan. Clan Alpine has a certain verisimilitude to the Clan Gregor, and is placed by the poet in Macgregor territory, but there was not in the time of James V. a real united clan within the district traversed by Roderick's fiery cross. The ambition of the powerful family of Douglas, and its rivalry with the royal authority, is also a matter of history. But James of Bothwell is an imaginary personage. So with Malcolm Grème, Roderick's neighbour. He is placed in veritable Graham territory; he is heir to lands in Menteith and Strathendrik, of which Grahams were long the lords; but there was no such royal ward in the reign of James V. It is enough for the poet's purpose that there might have been" (Minto). It is characteristic of Scott that the epithet *historic* is not applicable to this poem merely because its scene is laid in past times, and because it introduces us to historic personages, but also because not confining itself to the incidents and feelings of private life, it depicts those broader passions, sentiments and customs which belong to men as citizens, as members of great communities—in this poem, especially, the sentiments and habits developed by the clan system, and by the natural peculiarities of the land in which the Highlanders dwelt. With these things the poet was familiar not merely through history; he lived near enough to the year 1745, to know something, by direct contact, of the characteristics developed by the special conditions of Highland life. Doubtless, this first-hand acquaintance with his theme, and in a still greater degree, the poet's inborn passion for all that pertained to the history of his country, especially in its more romantic aspects, lend some of that vivacity and vigour to the poem, which are its most potent charm.

Nature in the Poem.—As a background to these romantic incidents and picturesque customs of the past, the poet was fortunate in finding a district not less charming and romantic and in perfect keeping with the figures and events of the foreground. The scene has more care and attention devoted to it than is the case either in the *Lay* or *Marmion*. In the older Romance poetry, upon which Scott's longer poems are based, "supernatural agencies play a large part, and help to awaken and sustain interest. The background of the stage is crowded with gnomes and giants, spectres and goblins. But Scott wrote for an

age when men's imaginations were stirred more by the beauty of the natural world than by the wonder of the supernatural. And so, while the German Romance writers, and their English followers like Lewis, 'barked back' to the supernatural machinery of earlier Romances, Scott, in the *Lady of the Lake*, weaves into his story the world of nature instead" (Masterman). But the poet did not, merely for the nonce and for the artistic purposes of his poem, assume an interest in the landscape; the love of romantic nature and the scenery of his native country was as much a part of his personality as his historic bent; and with the localities of the poem he had been familiarized by many an expedition since the day when, still a clerk in his father's office, in order to enforce a writ he had, "first entered," as he himself tells us, "Loch Katrine, riding in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear guard, and loaded arms." Knowledge such as this, acquired spontaneously and forming an integral part of the writer's past, is the proper basis for artistic work,—not information obtained for a particular purpose, as Scott himself, in later years, made a study of the district of *Rokeby*, note-book in hand. But here again, as in the case of his historic material, the artist works freely. Minto says, after remarking on Scott's treatment of history as quoted above, "Scott took at least equal pains to be true to nature in his descriptions of scenery, and yet he did not bind himself hand and foot. The real scenery of the Trosachs and lakes is depicted with careful fidelity. The truth of the description of lakes and hills and glens is so striking that as we recognize feature after feature we find ourselves trying to identify the precise locality of every incident. But the romancer did not tie himself down to the limitations of Nature quite so closely as that. Guides sometimes insist upon showing the very spot where the wretched kern was slain, the turn in the pathway where Fitz-James came upon the bivouac of Roderick Dhu, the very rock to which Fitz-James set his back when he was startled by the appearance of Roderick's ambush; but the story is not articulated to the scenery in such minor details. Scott aimed only at the semblance of probability; with this he was satisfied. The fact that many travellers try to verify every spot is a proof that he attained his object." The main peculiarities of Scott's treatment of nature have been noted by Ruskin (see *Modern Painters*, III, iv, chap. xvi), (1) the prominence of colour in his pictures, and the comparative ineffectiveness of his details of form when he does insert them,* (2) the

* Observe, for example, the power of the colour picture given in the single line, I, 262, with the comparative ineffectiveness of the details in ll. 190-203.

presenting of the world as seen by the eye, without any attempt, such as we find in Wordsworth and Shelley, to interpret it or see in it the manifestation of anything deeper.

Characterization.—As to his representation of human nature, Scott's power of characterization does not fully appear in his metrical romances. The personages of the *Lady of the Lake* are sufficiently vivid to serve their purpose in the story ; but do not possess such novelty and reality as to make the characterization an independent source of interest. The types represented are somewhat conventional, such as we have often encountered in literature, and do not possess that freshness and verisimilitude which belong to his best work in prose Romance. There is, indeed, not in the characters alone, but in the whole substance of this poem, something of artificial prettiness, which is unfavourable to realistic force ; so that sympathy and interest are less keenly aroused than is the case even with the *Lay* and *Marmion*.

Merits and Limitations.—Of course, this lack of intensity, of power to touch the feelings very profoundly, is a part of the somewhat superficial character of Scott's view of the world, already spoken of in the general introduction. It need scarcely be pointed out that the *Lady of the Lake* is a representation of the external spectacle of life,—that it excels by the brilliancy and variety of its pictures, not by the profundity and subtlety of its delineation of feeling, or of nature whether human or material. It presents life as seen from the outside ; it attempts nothing more. On the other hand, the vigour and dash with which this is done, is extraordinary. “There were good reasons,” says Minto in his Introduction, “why the poem should have been popular, and more so even than its predecessors : good reasons why it should remain popular. It is full of confident joy in the beauty and grandeur of nature, and in all that is generous, lovable, and admirable in man : full of happy faith, an optimism, a buoyancy, an energy that spring from the poet's own genial temper, specially encouraged at the moment by happy circumstances. He was in a mood to give the world of his best. Scott was in the very prime of his powers when he wrote the *Lady of the Lake*, and exhilarated by the success that those powers had won for him. These were the golden months of his life, bright with various enterprises, filled with a sense of triumph and an energy that nothing could daunt The exhilaration of this prosperous activity pervades the scenery and the characters of the poem. As we read we breathe with the breath of a strong and happy spirit ; our blood beats with the pulse of a strong

and healthy heart. There are no such sunrises in literature as the six sunrises with which the successive cantos open : the sky lightens, the birds sing, the dew-drops glisten as with the freshness of actual sound and sight. The energy of the narrative is superb."

Style.—With this vigour and freshness, with this lack of subtlety and profound thought, the style of the poem harmonizes. The metre has swing and animation, a capacity for different effects suited to a swift and varied narrative. The diction and imagery are rich and picturesque. The ease with which the poet's thought clothes itself in fairly appropriate language and rhythm are felt by the reader, and give attraction to the poem. But rarely are thought and form so aptly fitted as to cause the reader to pause, to lead him to linger fondly over a line or cadence. And, if he resists the tendency to be carried along by the vigorous style, and stops to examine, he finds repeatedly the evidence of slipshod and careless workmanship : imperfect rhymes, sometimes loose grammar, inappropriate diction, awkward combinations of sound.*

Relation to Earlier Poetry.—The metrical romance as written by Scott is a direct result of his antiquarian studies, a free reproduction of the ballads and metrical romances of the middle ages. The prevalent interest in mediæval things and the study of mediæval literature had already led many to attempt a revival of earlier literary forms ; and one poet before Scott, Coleridge, had with the insight and skill of genius showed, in the *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, how these forms might be adapted to the more cultivated and fastidious taste of a later age. Helped by his example, Scott's *Lay*, intended originally as a close and unambitious imitation of the earlier popular ballad, grew into a new form of poetry which, while preserving many of the peculiarities of its model, was no slavish imitation, but a new creation to suit an audience and conditions very different from those which had given shape to the older poetic narratives. When the *Lay* was completed, Scott felt that his work was, in some degree, a new species, that it was aimed at something different from the accepted poetry of the day, and

* For example : *imperfect rhymes*—(extremely frequent) II, 191-2, 593-4, 595-6, 673-4, 857-8, etc., (some of the imperfect rhymes may be explicable, as Rolfe suggests, from the poet's Scottish pronunciation, e.g., II, 740-1 ; III, 581-2 ; IV, 387-8 ; 515-16, etc.) ; *loose grammar*—"weep'd," II, 476 ; V, 32, 603-4 ; V, 280-1 ; *inappropriate diction*—"brook," I, 566 ; "hurl'd," III, 161 ; "styled," 731 ; "avouch," IV, 123, 483 ; "spy" 510 ; "show," V, 102 ; "bore," 232, etc. ; *inharmonious effects*—III, 105, the rhymes in the couplets, 240-1 and 242-3, "soon" and "room" in VI, 478.

to be judged by other standards. To prepare his readers for this, he, as an afterthought, hit upon the happy device of putting the poem into the mouth of an old minstrel, who, however, is supposed to have lived in comparatively recent and cultivated times. He thus indicates the tone and intention of his poetry—poetry based upon early popular ballads and aiming in general at their effects, but adding to these something of a later spirit and manner, and adapting them to more modern and fastidious taste. Even in the poem before us, the third of Scott's metrical romances, he still feels it appropriate to hint in introductory stanzas that his poem is an echo of ancient song, a belated strain upon the ancient Caledonian Harp. In harmony with this fact, there is, in the body of the poem, an intentional borrowing of words and phrases from ballad poetry, a suggestion of antiquity in forms and phraseology to mark its affiliation to ancient models. But the resemblance goes deeper than any such superficial and occasional imitation; *mutatis mutandis*, the subjects, the methods, the aims of Scott and his nameless predecessors are the same. The old ballad dealt in story and incident, addressed itself to a wide and popular audience, was accordingly rapid in its movement, confined itself to broad and obvious effects, was careless and naive in its style, knew nothing of the subtle and recondite, which would have been thrown away upon an unlettered audience and would have been lost in the rapidity of oral recitation. A close following of these ballads would have been mere pedantic antiquarianism in the case of a poet living at the beginning of the present century and addressing a *reading* public long familiarized with the most developed poetry. So there are great differences between Scott and the old ballad writers; the very moderate admission of supernatural elements, the frequent suggestion of a natural explanation, the rejection of the horrible and grisly, the frequent and minute descriptions of scenery over which the hearers of a ballad singer would have yawned, the greater refinement, the greater detail, the greater length of the whole—all these are permissible and desirable for an audience that reads at leisure the printed page, as compared with an audience that listens at a sitting to a reciting minstrel.*

Jeffrey's Criticism.—In conclusion may be quoted, upon Scott's poetry in general as well as upon the *Lady of the Lake* in particular, the judgment of his great critical contemporary, Jeffrey, the editor of

* It will be profitable for the student to make a comparison for himself between Scott's poem and the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens*, which may be found in the Appendix to this volume.

the *Edinburgh Review*, who was certainly not predisposed to be unduly favourable to Scott :—

“The great secret of his popularity, and the leading characteristic of his poetry, appear to us to consist evidently in this, that he has made more use of common topics, images and expressions, than any original poet of later times. . . . In the choice of his subjects, for example, he does not attempt to interest merely by fine observation or pathetic sentiment, but takes the assistance of a story, and enlists the reader's curiosity among his motives for attention. Then his characters are all selected from the most common *dramatis personæ* of poetry ;—kings, warriors, knights, outlaws, nuns, minstrels, secluded damsels, wizards, and true lovers. . . . In the management of the passions, again, Mr. Scott appears to have pursued the same popular and comparatively easy course. . . . He has dazzled the reader with the splendour, and even warmed him with the transient heat of various affections ; but he has nowhere fairly kindled him with enthusiasm, or melted him into tenderness. Writing for the world at large, he has wisely abstained from attempting to raise any passion to a height to which worldly people could not be transported ; and contented himself with giving his reader the chance of feeling as a brave, kind, and affectionate gentleman must often feel in the ordinary course of his existence, without trying to breathe into him either that lofty enthusiasm which disdains the ordinary business and amusements of life, or that quiet and deep sensibility which unfits for most of its pursuits. With regard to diction and imagery, too, it is quite obvious that Mr. Scott has not aimed at writing either in a very pure or a very consistent style. He seems to have been anxious only to strike, and to be easily and universally understood. . . . Indifferent whether he coins or borrows, and drawing with equal freedom on his memory and his imagination, he goes boldly forward, in full reliance on a never-failing abundance ; and dazzles, with his richness and variety, even those who are most apt to be offended with his glare and irregularity. . . . there is a medley of bright images and glowing words, set carelessly and loosely together—a diction tinged successively with the careless richness of Shakespeare, the harshness and antique simplicity of the old romances, the homeliness of vulgar ballads and anecdotes, and the sentimental glitter of the most modern poetry—passing from the borders of the ludicrous to those of the sublime—alternately minute and energetic—sometimes artificial, and frequently negligent—but always full of spirit and vivacity,—abounding in images that are striking, at first sight, to minds of every contexture—and never expressing a sentiment which it can cost the most ordinary reader any exertion to comprehend.”

Again, “There is nothing cold, creeping, or feeble, in all Mr. Scott's poetry ; . . . he always attempts vigorously. . . . Allied to this inherent vigour and animation, and in a great degree derived from it, is that air of facility and freedom which adds so peculiar a grace to most of Mr. Scott's compositions.

“Upon the whole, we are inclined to think more highly of *The Lady of the Lake* than of either of its author's former publications (the *Lay* and *Marmion*). We are more sure, however, that it has fewer faults than that it has greater beauties ; and as its beauties bear a strong resemblance to those with which the public has been already made familiar in these celebrated works, we should not be surprised if its popularity were less splendid and remarkable. For our own parts, however, we are of opinion that it will be oftener read hereafter than either of them ; and that, if it had appeared first in the series, their reception would have been less favourable than that which it has experienced. It is more polished in its diction, and more regular in its versifica-

tion; there is a greater proportion of pleasing and tender passages, with much less antiquarian detail; and, upon the whole, a larger variety of characters, more artfully and judiciously contrasted. There is nothing so fine, perhaps, as the battle in *Marmion*, or so picturesque as some of the scattered sketches in the *Lay*; but there is a richness and a spirit in the whole piece which does not pervade either of these poems,

a profusion of incident and a shifting brilliancy of colouring that reminds us of the witchery of Ariosto, and a constant elasticity and occasional energy which seem to belong more peculiarly to the author now before us."

Texts.—Many annotated editions of the *Lady of the Lake* have been published; among these may be mentioned Minto's (*Clarendon Press*), Rolfe's (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), Stuart (Macmillan's *English Classics*), Masterman's (*Pitt Press Series*); to these editions the following Notes are largely indebted.

CANTO I.

1-27. These opening stanzas are apart from and furnish an introduction to the narrative which follows. They serve like the Introductions to the Cantos of the *Lay*, though in a less elaborate fashion, to explain the character of the poem: that the writer is here attempting something in the manner of the ancient minstrels of his native land. The slow movement of the Spenserian stanza serves to contrast these lines with rapid and less dignified tetrameter couplets of the main story.

1. Cf. Moore's "Dear harp of my country, in silence I found thee."

2. **witch-elm.** The broad-leaved drooping elm common in Scotland (*ulmus montanus*); *witch* (more properly spelled *wych* or *wich*) is said to mean drooping (A.S. *wicen*, to bend), but, doubtless, popularly and with Scott, the word 'witch' is supposed here to mean *wizard* (cf. "wizard elm," vi, 846 below), and the epithet is connected with the use of forked branches as divining-rods; riding switches from it were also supposed to insure good luck on a journey.

St. Fillan's spring. "Scott being an antiquary and a scholar as well as a poet, and his poetry being interpenetrated with antiquarian and scholarly allusion, it is worth while to ask why the minstrel's harp is hung on a witch-elm by a spring sacred to St. Fillan. Possibly he had in his mind, besides the general sacredness of the elm, that an elm gave shelter to Orpheus when he sat down to lament Eurydice, and that in Virgil's lower world a gigantic elm-tree is the seat of dreams (*Aeneid*, vi, 282-5). As for Saint Fillan, he was an especial favourite with Scott, who mentioned 'St. Fillan's powerful prayer' in his early poem of *Glenfinlas*, and again introduced him in *Marmion*, where one of the objects of De Wilton's pilgrimage (Canto I, st. 29) is

‘Saint Fillan’s blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.’

Such a saint was an appropriate patron of the harp, with which David exorcised the evil spirit of Saul. Saint Fillan owes his position as a saint of national importance entirely to Scott, who ennobled a local superstition first made prominent by Pennant in his *Tour in Scotland* (1772). Strathfillan lies between Tyndrum and Killin in the upper valley of the Tay. It contained a chapel dedicated to Saint Fillan, to which, in Pennant’s time, and down to Anderson’s (1835), mad people were brought to be cured. The patients were dipped in a linn-pool of the river Fillan: then carried three times sunwise round a cairn: then left bound all night within the ruins of the chapel. They were often, it is said, found dead next morning: but if their bonds were loosed (of course, by the Saint’s intervention), it was considered a good omen of their ultimate recovery. Fillan was also noted for a miraculous left arm, which gave light to his right when this was occupied in copying Scripture. This miraculous arm was present at the battle of Bannockburn, where it waved miraculous encouragement to Robert Bruce out of its silver box” (Minto).

6. **Minstrel Harp.** In primitive times poetry was sung, extempore or otherwise, by wandering *Minstrels*, who accompanied their performance on the strings of the harp, making music of a character probably resembling the strumming on a banjo which accompanies negro songs.

10. **Caledon or Caledonia**, the Roman name for Scotland.

14. **according pause.** A pause for the *accord*, or accompaniment of the harp. Murray’s *New Dictionary* quotes from Bacon, “listening unto the airs and accords of the Harpe”; cf. *Marmion*, II, 11:

Soon as they neared his turrets strong,
The maidens raised St. Hilda’s song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close;
Then answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drowned amid the breakers’ roar
According chorus rose.

17. **burden.** This is not the same word as *burden*, meaning a load, but comes from French *bourdon*, a continuous low note accompanying a tune; hence its meaning here—‘that which is always present,’ ‘the theme.’

29. **Monan's rill.** No rill of this name is known, and it is, doubtless, an invention of the poet. A Scotch saint named Monan lived in the fourth century.

31. **Glenartney.** The valley of the Artney, a tributary of the Earn, between Benvoirlich on the north and Uam-Var on the south.

34. **deep-mouth'd.** Cf. Scott's *Vision of Don Roderick*, iii: "The deep-mouth'd bell of vespers toll'd"; and *I Hen. VI.*, II, iv, 12: "Between two dogs which had the deeper mouth."

45. **beam'd frontlet.** The *beam* is the main stem of the horn from which the branches, or *tines*, start. The beam is not marked until the animal is some four years old, so that the possession of a "beam'd frontlet," *i.e.*, of horns with a manifest central stem and branches, indicates a full-grown stag. Cf. Somerville's *Chase*, iii, 405 ff., where "the royal stag" is described as tossing high "his beamy head."

47. **tainted gale.** Cf. Thomson's *Autumn*, 363 :

The spaniel struck
Stiff by the tainted gale.

53. **Uam-Var.** "Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Caillander in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times, it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this stronghold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small enclosure, or recess, surrounded with large rocks, and open above head. It may have been originally designed as a toil for deer, who might get in from the outside, but would find it difficult to return. This opinion prevails among the old sportsmen and deer-stalkers in the neighbourhood" (Scott's note).

54. **opening.** Here a technical hunting term meaning 'breaking into cry on sight of the game'; cf. Scott's *Bridal of Triermain*, III, xii, 17: "As when the hound is opening;" and *Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV, ii, 209: "If I bark out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again."

55. **paid them back** with echoes.

66. **cairn.** Not, in this case, an artificial heap of stones, but a rocky pinnacle.

71. **linn.** A word of Celtic origin meaning a pool, but also applied to the ravine through which a stream runs.

76-7. See note on l. 53.

84. **shrewdly.** In a keen fashion so as to cause trouble; cf. *Julius Caesar*, III, i, 145: "My misgiving still falls shrewdly to the purpose."

85. **burst.** A hard run; cf. Thackeray's *Esmond*: "During a burst over the downs after a hare."

89. **Menteith.** The district through which the Teith flows; this river drains Loch Katrine and empties into the Forth; see map.

91. **moss.** Applied here, as commonly in Scotland, to a boggy district; cf. *moss-trooper* in the *Lay*.

93. **Lochard** is a little lake five miles south of Loch Katrine.

Aberfoyle is a village a little to the east of Lochard.

95. **Loch-Achray.** See map.

97. **Benvenue.** A mountain south of Loch Katrine, 2,386 feet in height.

103. **Cambus-more**, near Callander, on the wooded banks of the Keltie, a tributary of the Teith, was the seat of a family named Buchanan, whom Scott frequently visited. While staying there in 1809, the poet wrote the Stag Chase, made notes of the scenery, and rode from Loch Vennachar to Stirling in the time allotted to Fitz-James.

105. **Benledi.** A mountain to the north of Loch Vennachar, 2,882 feet high.

106. **Bochastle's heath.** A moor between Callander and Loch Vennachar.

112. **Brigg of Turk.** *Brigg* is a Scotch form for *bridge*, as in Burns' poem, *The Briggs of Ayr*; this bridge crosses a stream that descends from Glen Finlas, between Lochs Achray and Vennachar. *Brigg of Turk* is explained to mean 'bridge of the wild boar.'

117. **Emboss'd.** Rolfe quotes from the *Art of Venerie or Hunting*, by an Elizabethan writer, Tuberville: "When the hart is foaming at the mouth, we say that he is emboss'd." So Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, xiii, 3.

120. **Saint Hubert's breed.** Scott himself annotates this line with a quotation from Tuberville: "The hounds which we call St. Hubert's

hounds are commonly all blacke, yet nevertheless, the race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St. Hubert have always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace. Whereupon we may conceive that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise."

127. **quarry.** The hunted animal; but the word is more properly applied to the game after it is slaughtered, as in *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 206.

131. **that mountain high.** Benvenue.

137-8. "When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling, the desperate animal." (Scott's note.)

138. **whinyard.** A dagger, or short sword; in *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, v, 7, the same weapon is called a *whinger*.

145. **Trosach's.** The word is said to mean 'the rough or bristled territory,' and is applied to the districts between Lochs Katrine and Vennachar—more especially to the pass between Lochs Katrine and Achray.

151. **Chiding.** "An example of the old sense of the word as applied to any oft-repeated noise; originally a figurative use of *chide* (intransitive) as expressing a loud, impassioned, utterance of anger, displeasure, etc." (Rolfe's note.) Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, III, i, 45: "The sea that chides the banks of England," and *M. N. D.*, IV, i, 120: "Never did I hear such gallant chiding," (where the barking of a pack of hounds is spoken of).

163. In 1536 James V. was in France in connection with negotiations for his marriage.

166. **Woe worth the chase.** Woe be to the chase; cf. *Faerie Queen*, II, vi, 32: "Wo worth the man that," etc.; "worth" is from A.S. *weorthan*, to become.

180-1. In the first edition *pace* and *chase* stood at the ends of these lines instead of "way" and "day."

196-7. The tower of Babel; see *Genesis*, xi, 1-9.

208. **dewdrops sheen.** "This is sometimes printed dewdrops' sheen, under the impression that *sheen* is a noun. It is an archaic adjective used by Chancer and Spenser. 'Dewdrop,' not dewdrops, is the read-

ing of the MS. : the use of the singular in such cases is almost a mannerism of Scott's" (Minto's note.) Cf. "scepter shene," *Fuero Queen*, I, ii, 10 ; and V, 10, below.

212. **Boon.** Bountiful ; cf. *Paradise Lost*, iv, 242-4 : "Flowers . . . which . . . nature boon poured forth ;" a poetical adjective derived from Fr. *bon* ; confusion with an altogether different word, *boon*, meaning 'a gift,' has probably given rise to the sense in this and similar passages. (See Murray's *New English Dictionary*.)

218-9. "The gaudy colour of the foxglove suggests pride, and the poisonous 'deadly nightshade' punishment. Ruskin quotes the line as an example of 'Scott's habit of drawing a slight *moral* from every scene—and this moral almost always melancholy.'" (Masterman.)

224. **warrior oak.** The oak is so called either because ships of war were made of it, or because of its strength and hardness. In older poetry there was a fashion for applying such epithets to trees ; cf. the list in *Fuero Queen*, I, i, 8-9, which is itself an imitation of Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules*, 176 ff. ; in both these passages the oak is styled the "builder oak." (See Skeat's note on latter passage in Chaucer's *Minor Poems*.)

227. **frequent flung**, etc. Flung his boughs *thickly*. This use of *frequent* in the sense of 'crowded' is Latin, and is found in Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 794-7.

The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat ;
A thousand demigods on golden seats,
Frequent and full.

231. **streamers** of various vines.

254. "Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing from the defile called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of trees." (Scott's note.)

274. **wildering.** Bewildering ; cf. 434 below, and V, 22.

277. **Ben-an.** This mountain (1,800 ft. high) is to the north of the Trosachs separating that pass from Glenfilas.

281. **churchman.** "In the old sense of one holding high office in the church. Cf. Shakespeare, *2 Hen. VI*, i, 3, 72, where Cardinal Beaufort is called 'the imperious churchman.'" (Rolfe.)

286. **bugle-horn.** Literally the horn of the 'bugle,' or wild ox; so Mandeville (a supposed contemporary of Chaucer) speaks in his *Travels* of "horns of great oxen or bugles," and Chaucer himself uses bugle-horn of a drinking-horn: "drinketh of his bugle-horn the vyn." (Franklin's *Tale*, l. 525.)

290. **should lave.** "Did lave" is the reading of the MS. and first edition.

297. Strings of beads were and are employed to keep count of the number of prayers said; in the rosaries commonly used in the Roman Catholic church. small beads are used to mark the *Ave Maria* and large ones the *Pater Noster*; *bead* originally meant 'a prayer'.

302. **beshrew.** "May evil befall thee" (cf. note on l. 84 above); used commonly in earlier English as a mild imprecation, cf. *2 Hen. IV.*, ii, 3, 45: "Beshrew your heart, fair daughter." Murray in *New English Dictionary* suggests that it may not be an imperative, but that there may be an ellipsis of *I*, as in *prithce, thank you*, etc.

307. **Yet pass we that.** Let us overlook that.

313. "The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their Lowland neighbours. 'In former times those parts of this district which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible by strong barriers of rocks, and mountains, and lakes. It was a border country, and, though on the very verge of the low country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to society. 'Tis well known that in the Highlands it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful, but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another; and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners.'—Graham's *Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire*, Edin., 1806, p. 97. The reader will therefore be pleased to remember that the scene of the poem is laid in a time,

'When tooming faulds, or sweeping of a glen
Had still been held the deed of gallant men.'

(Scott's note.)

317. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, I, ii, 96: "An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him."

334. **Lady of the Lake.** This phrase is probably employed with a reminiscence of its use in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, Bk. I, chap. xxiii. where the maiden who gave Excalibur to Arthur is so called.

344. **A Nymph, a Naiad.** According to Greek mythology, nature was peopled by inferior female divinities called *Nymphs*; the Nymphs of streams were called Naiads.

346. **ardent.** Apparently used in its literal, not metaphorical, sense of 'burning.'

363. **snood.** The ribbon with which Scotch maidens bound the hair; see note on III, 114.

385. **One only.** For the inversion, cf. *Julius Caesar*, I, ii, 157: "When there is in it but one only man," *Deserted Village*, l. 39:

"One only master grasps the whole domain."

408. **wont.** The verb *won* means originally 'to dwell'; so in *Paradise Lost*, vii, 457:

As from his lair the wild beast, where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den.

and below, IV, 298:

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who wonn'd within the hill.

A secondary sense was 'to be accustomed,' as in *1 Henry VI.*, I, ii, 14: "Talbot is taken whom we wont to fear"; so also below, IV, 278. In modern prose English it is restricted to the form of the past participle *wont* in the sense of 'accustomed.' But we have also the form *wonted* in the same sense, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 113: "Change their wonted liveries." This indicates the existence of a weak verb, perhaps formed from the noun *wont*; "wont" in the present line, as well as in IV, 268 below, evidently is the present tense of this verb; so *Paradise Lost*, I, 764.

409-10. James died in 1542, at the age of thirty, so that this statement is not historically true; but, on the whole, the description of this stanza is in accord with tradition. "This change in age," says Masterman, "unimportant in itself, is interesting as illustrating Scott's preference for middle-aged heroes. Cranstoun and Deloraine in the *Lay*, Marmion and DeWilton in *Marmion*, Roderick Dhu and Fitz-James in this poem, are all examples in point. Possibly this preference may be due to the fact that Scott was himself verging on middle-age

when these poems were written." But in the present case it seems probable that Scott's reason for making James middle-aged is to render his ultimate attitude towards Ellen—a protecting and somewhat paternal one—more natural and fitting. For the history of James's reign the student may consult Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, I, chaps. xxv.-xxviii, especially chap. xxvii; he succeeded to the throne as a child, was long practically a prisoner in the hands of the Douglasses; emancipated himself from their control and banished the whole connection in 1528; was active in repressing disorder and curbing the lawless nobility, the Borderers and the Highlanders; visited France in 1534, married a daughter of Francis I, she died very soon, and in 1538 married another French lady.

425. "‘Making light of the need that his words revealed.’ ‘Show’ is another favourite rhyme-word with Scott, used by him in the peculiar sense of *declare* or *indicate in words*. It is used in this sense in II, 638, IV, 148, V, 102" (Minto.)

440. **ptarmigan and heath-cock.** The former is a species of grouse; the latter the male of the black grouse.

443. **by the rood.** A common oath, cf. *Richard III.*, III, ii, 77; *rood* means ‘cross,’ cf. *Holyrood Palace* in Edinburgh.

458. **Allan-bane.** “Bane, in Gaelic, means white, or fair-haired.” (Stuart.)

460. “If force of evidence could force us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of second-sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitarangh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin [*Description of the Western Islands*, 1716], a steady believer in second-sight, gives the following account of it: ‘The second-sight is a singular faculty of seeing an otherwise invisible object, without any previous means used by the person that used it for that end: the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see nor think of anything else except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial according to the object that was represented to them’” (Scott’s note). Scott makes frequent use of this peculiarly Highland superstition; see *Waverley*, chap. xvi, *Legend of Montrose*, chap. iv.

464. **Lincoln green.** A green cloth, so called from the place where

it was manufactured, and used for hunting-dresses. Cf. *Faerie Queen*, VI, ii, 5 :

All in a woodman's jacket he was clad
Of Lincoln green.

475. **errant-knight.** Literally a 'wandering knight,' a knight roaming about in search of adventures.

476. **sooth.** True ; the word appears as an adjective in Milton's *Comus*, l. 823, and in 'soothsayer' ; as a noun, in the phrases 'in sooth,' 'forsooth.'

478. **emprise.** Enterprise ; a word found often in Spenser, cf. *Faerie Queen*, II, vii, 39, etc.

490. See note on l. 227 above.

500. **winded.** "In his novels Scott almost invariably uses the weak form 'winded,' where we would expect the strong form 'wound.' In his poems he uses either form according to the necessities of metre and rhyme. See Canto IV, 502" (Stuart).

504. "The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden" (Scott's note).

525. **Idæan vine.** *Ida* was the name of a mountain near Troy ; see opening of Tennyson's *Oenone*. "What Scott meant by the Idæan vine is a puzzle. He could not have meant the true vine, for Idæan is not one of its classical epithets, and besides it could not have borne Loch Katrine's 'keen and searching air.' The botanical name of the red whortleberry or cowberry is *Vaccinium Vitis Idæa*, but this short shrubby plant is not a creeper. Professor Trail, the botanist, suggests to me that Scott may have meant the stone bramble, which has a vine-like leaf, and might be 'taught to climb.' Scott may have been misled about the botanical name. Dorothy Wordsworth, in her description of Bothwell Castle, mentions 'a broad-leaved creeping plant which scrambled up the castle wall along with the ivy,' and had 'vine-like branches.' Bothwell Castle was Ellen's ancestral seat. Perhaps Scott saw the plant there. The Douglas who then owned Bothwell Castle

was a friend of his, and it was probably out of compliment to him that he made it the seat of his exiled Douglas" (Minto).

528. **plant could bear**, *i.e.*, plant *which* could, etc.

546. **target**. Shield; cf. V, 305.

548. **arrows store**. Store of arrows, plenty of arrows; cf. Milton, *L'Allegro*:

With store of ladies whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize.

566. **brook**. "Bear, endure; now seldom used except with reference to what is endured against one's will or inclination. It seems to be a favourite word with Scott" (Rolfe). Cf. III, 77; V, 597; VI, 187, 591.

568. **took the word**. Spoke in her turn.

573. "These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto by the name of Ferran. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in mortal combat. . . . Ascapart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the *History of Bevis of Hampton*, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of the gate of Southampton, while the other is occupied by Bevis himself" (Scott's note).

581-2. The MS. shows that Scott wrote originally:

To whom, though more remote her claim
Young Ellen gave a mother's name.

Mr. Minto says: "The MS. shows that the poet originally intended to make this lady the wife of the exile and Ellen's mother. He probably changed his intention, and made her the sister-in-law of Douglas and Roderick Dhu's mother to furnish an obvious and probable motive for their receiving the Chieftain's shelter and protection."

585. "The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name or lineage before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of" (Scott's note).

591. **Snowdown**. An old name of Stirling Castle; see on VI, 789 below.

Fitz-James. *Fitz* is the Norman patronymic meaning 'son of'; cf. *Mac, O.*

592, ff. James is covertly referring to the fact that the royal power in Scotland had through the misfortunes of his predecessors, and internal feuds, fallen very low.

595. James IV. had been killed in the battle of Flodden, 1513.

596. **wot.** Knows; this is an example of a preterit which assumed a present meaning (cf. Lat. *nori, meminī*); hence absence of the inflection of the 3rd person sing., present. (See Emerson's *History of the English Language*, § 451.)

616, ff. Ellen playfully maintains the idea of a knight-errant and enchanted hall (ll. 532-3 above).

Weird. Gifted with supernatural powers; cf. the "weird sisters" of *Macbeth*.

down. Hill.

620. **viewless.** Invisible, as in *Measure for Measure*, III, i, 124: "the viewless winds."

631. Cf. *Richard III.*, IV, i, 84: "The golden dew of sleep," and *Julius Caesar*, II, i, 230: "The honey-heavy dew of slumber."

638. **pibroch.** "A Highland air . . . generally applied to those airs that are played on the bag-pipe before the Highlanders when they go out to battle." (Jamieson.)

642. The bittern is a marsh bird with a hollow note, so that it is sometimes called the 'Mire-drum.' Goldsmith (*Deserted Village*, l. 44) speaks of "the hollow-sounding bittern."

648-9. The habit of bards improvising for the occasion is shown in *Waverley*, chap. xxii.

704. **grisly.** Grim, horrible; a frequent word in earlier poetry; cf. *1 Henry VI.*, I, iv, 47: "My grisly countenance made others fly." It is derived from the same root as *gruesome*, but is sometimes confused with the quite different word *grizzled* (from Fr. *gris*, 'grey').

740. **told.** The word tell means originally to count (cf. *tellers* in Parliament, who count the votes, and "the tale of bricks" *Exodus*, v, 8). So in Milton's *L'Allegro*: "every shepherd tells his tale."

741. Cf. note on l. 297 above.

CANTO II.

7. "That Highland chieftains, to a late period, retained in their service the bard, as a family officer, admits of very easy proof. The author of the 'Letters from the North of Scotland,' an officer of the Engineers, quartered at Inverness about 1726, who certainly cannot be deemed a favourable witness, gives the following account of the office, and of a bard whom he heard exercise his talent of recitation :—"The bard is skilled in the genealogy of all the Highland families, sometimes preceptor to the young laird, celebrates in Irish verse the original of the tribe, the famous warlike actions of the successive heads, and sings his own lyrics as an opiate to the chief when indisposed for sleep. But poets are not equally esteemed and honoured in all countries. I happened to be a witness of the dishonour done to the muse at the house of one of the chiefs, where two of these bards were set at a good distance, at the lower end of a long table, with a parcel of Highlanders of no extraordinary appearance, over a cup of ale. Poor inspiration ! They were not asked to drink a glass of wine at our table, though the whole company consisted only of the *great man*, one of his near relations, and myself. After some little time, the chief ordered one of them to sing me a Highland song. The bard readily obeyed, and with a hoarse voice and a tune of a few various notes, began, as I was told, one of his own lyrics ; and when he had proceeded to the fourth or fifth stanza, I perceived, by the names of several persons, glens, and mountains, which I had known or heard of before, that it was an account of some clan battle. But in his going on, the chief (who piques himself upon his school learning), at some particular passage, bid him cease, and cried out, "There's nothing like that in Virgil or Homer." I bowed and told him I believed so. This you may believe was very edifying and delightful.'" (Scott's note.)

10. The song indicates that Allan-bane, presumably through his supernatural powers, has some idea of the true character of the visitor.

22-23. 'May you be successful at tournaments' ; this is indicated by the earlier MS. reading : "At tourneys where the brave resort."

29-32. 'cf. *Marmion*. Introduction III, 137 :

Yon weather-beaten hind . . .
Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak.

87-89. Cf. ll. 22-3 above, with note. •

94. **parts.** Departs; cf. Gray's *Elegy*, "the knell of parting day," and *Deserted Village*, 171, "Beside the bed where parting life was laid."

103. The first edition reads: "The step of parting fair to spy."

109. **the Græme.** "The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which for metrical reasons is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John, the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realized his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the non-conformists, during the reign of Charles II. and James II." (Scott's note.) The special Græme country lies to the south of the valley of the Teith, and so adjoins the district supposed, in the poem, to belong to Clan Alpine.

112. **in hall and bower.** 'Among men and women.' The *hall* was the main apartment of the palace where the men particularly gathered; *bower*, meaning originally a chamber, was applied to the ladies' apartments.

131. **Saint Modan.** A Scotch abbot of the seventh century. "I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound." (Scott's note.)

141. **Bothwell's banner'd hall.** "Bothwell Castle is one of the finest baronial ruins in Scotland. It stands 'nobly overlooking the Clyde,' about nine miles above Glasgow. . . . There is some authority for representing it as a possession of the House of Angus at the date given in the poem. For a description of the ruin see Dorothy Wordsworth's *Tour*, p. 49." (Minto.)

142. "The downfall of the Douglasses of the house of Angus during the reign of James V. is the event alluded to in the text. The Earl of Angus, it will be remembered, had married the queen dowager, and availed himself of the right which he thus acquired, as well as of his extensive power, to retain the king in a sort of tutelage, which approached very near to captivity. Several open attempts were made to rescue James from this thralldom, with which he was well known to be deeply disgusted; but the valour of the Douglasses and their allies gave them the victory in every conflict. At length the king, while residing at Falkland, contrived to escape by night out of his own court and palace, and rode full speed to Stirling Castle, where the governor, who was of the opposite faction, joyfully received him. Being thus at liberty, James speedily summoned around him such peers as he knew to be most inimical to the domination of Angus, and laid his complaint before them, says Pitcottie, 'with great lamentations; showing to them how he was holden in subjection, thir years bygone, by the Earl of Angus and his kin and friends, who oppressed the whole country and spoiled it, under the pretence of justice and his authority; and had slain many of his lieges, kinsmen, and friends, because they would have had it mended at their hands, and put him at liberty, as he ought to have been, at the counsel of his whole lords, and not have been subjected and corrected with no particular men, by the rest of his nobles. Therefore, said he, I desire, my lords, that I may be satisfied of the said earl, his kin, and his friends; for I avow that Scotland shall not hold us both while [*i. e.* till] I be revenged on him and his. The lords, hearing the king's complaint and lamentation, and also the great rage, fury, and malice that he bore towards the Earl of Angus, his kin and friends, they concluded all, and thought it best that he should be summoned to underly the law; if he found no caution, nor yet compear himself, that he should be put to the horn, with all his kin and friends, so many as were contained in the letters. And farther, the lords ordained, by advice of his majesty, that his brother and friends should be summoned to find caution to underly the law within a certain day, or else be put to the horn. But the earl appeared not, nor none for him; and so he was put to the horn, with all his kin and friends: so many as were contained in the summons that compeared not were banished, and holden traitors to the king.'" (Scott's note.)

159. **From Tweed to Spey.** The Tweed is the southern boundary of Scotland; the Spey rises in Inverness-shire and flows north through Banffshire.

168. **resign'd** is the past tense; 'did not really yield more than the oak yields to the wind.'

170. **reave**. Tear away; cf. *Maerie Queen*, I, iii, 36: "He to him lept, in mind to reave his life," Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*, l. 766. The participle *reft* is still used.

198. Cf. Milton, *L'Allegro*, 79-80:

Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.

200. A bleeding heart was the crest of the Douglasses. Robert Bruce on his death-bed bequeathed his heart to his friend Lord James Douglas, to be borne to the Holy Land. Douglas, accordingly, set forth with the heart enclosed in a casket, but, on his way, fell in battle with the Saracens in Spain; the heart was brought back and buried in Melrose Abbey.

206. **strathspey**. "A variety of the Highland reel, named after the district where it became noted [the *Strath* or valley of the Spey]. There is a trifling anachronism in putting the word into Ellen's mouth; it was not used until late in the eighteenth century" (Minto).

213. **Clan-Alpine**. "There was not, strictly speaking, a clan Alpine, but there were a number of clans of whom clan Gregor was regarded as the chief, who claimed descent from Kenneth Macalpine, the first king of all Scotland, and were known as Siol Alpine, or race of Alpine" (Minto).

216. **A Lennox foray**. See note on l. 416 below.

220. **Black Sir Roderick**. *Dhu* means black. See note on l. 408 below.

221. "This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility" (Scott's note).

Holy-Rood. The royal palace at Edinburgh.

229. "The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not

entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise" (Scott's note).

236-7. Roderick and Ellen, being first cousins, were within the degrees prohibited by the Church of Rome, and could not marry except by dispensation of the pope.

251. **orphan** belongs to "child" in the next line.

254. **shrouds**. Protects; cf. *Faerie Queen*, I, i, 6: *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, xiii, 71.

260. **Maronnan's cell**. "The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a *cell*, or chapel dedicated to Saint Maronoch, or Marnoch, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered" (Scott's note). *Kill*=cell, as in Colmekill, the cell of Columba.

270. **Bracklinn's thundering wave**. "This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Callander, in Menteith" (Scott's note).

274. **claymore**. Broadsword; the word is Gaelic, and means literally 'great sword.'

294. **shadowy**. Dark, sombre.

303. **woe the while**. Woe be to the time. *While*, now usually a conjunction, was originally a noun meaning 'time.'

305, ff. "Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of **TINE-MAN**, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. He was vanquished, as every reader must remember, in the bloody battle of Homildon-hill, near Wooler, where he himself lost an eye, and was made prisoner by Hotspur. He was no less unfortunate when allied with Percy, being wounded and taken at the battle of Shrewsbury. He was so unsuccessful in an attempt to besiege Roxburgh Castle, that it was called the *Foul Raid*, or disgraceful expedition. His ill fortune left him indeed at the battle of Beaugé, in France; but it was only to return with double emphasis at the subsequent action of Vernoi^l, the last and most unlucky of his encounters, in which he fell, with the flower of the Scottish chivalry, then serving as auxiliaries in France, and about two thousand common soldiers, A.D. 1424" (Scott's note).

309-10. "The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time" (Scott's note).

319. **Beltane game.** "Beltane or beltein, old May-day, celebrated in many parts of Scotland down to the end of the last century by bonfires and dances. The ancient Gaels lighted bonfires also at Lammas and Hallowmas; the custom survives in Scotland at Hallowe'en" (Minto).

327. **canna's hoary beard.** The down of the *canna* or cotton-grass. *Canna* is a word of Gaelic origin.

335. **Glengyle.** A glen at the western end of Loch Katrine.

337. **Brianchoil.** A promontory on the northern shore of the lake.

340. **banner'd Pine.** This is a rather far-fetched expression for a banner with a pine upon it (cf. l. 401 below); the pine was the badge of the MacGregors.

343. **brave.** Fine, splendid, beautiful; the word is continually used in Scottish dialect in the provincial form *braw*. *Brave* is used frequently by Shakespeare in the sense which it has here: *Hamlet*, II, ii, 312: "This brave o'erhanging firmament;" so *bravery*=finery, Spenser, *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, l. 858.

345. **bonnets.** The word is applied in Scotland to a man's cap.

351. **chanters.** "The pipe of the bagpipes on which the melody is played. The pipes thrown over the shoulder, which are generally decorated with ribbons, are the 'drones.' Scott ignores the distinction, probably for the sake of the more poetic word 'chanter'" (Minto).

363, ff. "The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the 'current of a heady fight.' To this opinion Dr. Beattie has given his suffrage, in the following elegant passage:—'A *pibroch* is a species of tune, peculiar, I think, to the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. It is performed on a bagpipe, and differs totally from all other music. Its rhythm is so irregular, and its notes, especially in the quick movement, so mixed and huddled together, that a stranger finds it impossible to reconcile his ear to it, so as to perceive its modulation.

Some of these pibrochs, being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion resembling a march ; then gradually quicken into the onset ; run off with noisy confusion and turbulent rapidity, to imitate the conflict and pursuit ; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy ; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession.'—*Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition*, chap. iii, note" (Scott's note).

367. hurrying. Note that this word belongs to "their" (l. 368)—a construction not permitted in modern prose, but found in poetry, and historically justifiable, "their" being really the genitive of the pronoun and not a pronominal adjective.

371. closing. Not 'ending' but 'beginning' ; from 'close' in the sense of 'coming to close quarters' ; cf. V, 389.

374. target. Shield ; cf. I, 546.

383. clarion. The *clarion* is a trumpet whose note is peculiarly clear and shrill.

392. burden bore. Maintained the undersong ; cf. *Tempest*, I, 2, 381 : "And, sweet sprites, the burden bear." The *burden* (Fr. *bourdon*) was the bass or undersong which was "usually continued when the singers of the air paused at the end of a stanza, and (when vocal) was usually sung to words forming a refrain." Hence *burden* in the sense of a chorus or refrain. Cf. I, 17 above, with note.

395. The words of the chorus were the first he was able to distinguish.

405. bourgeon. Swell into bud. Cf. *In Memoriam*, cv. :—

Now bourgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares.

408. "Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Thus the Duke of Argyle is called MacCallum More, or the *son of Colin the Great*. Sometimes, however, it is derived from armorial distinctions, or the memory of some great feat ; thus Lord Scaforth, as chief of the Mackenzies, or Clan-Kennet, bears the epithet of Caber-fae, or *Buck's Head*, as representative of Colin Fitzgerald, founder of the

family, who saved the Scottish king when endangered by a stag. But besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy*; sometimes from size, as *big* or *more*; at other times from some peculiar exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies,

Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.

The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat songs of the Highlanders, which were usually composed in honour of a favourite chief. They are so adapted as to keep time with the sweep of the oars, and it is easy to distinguish between those intended to be sung to the oars of a galley, where the stroke is lengthened and doubled, as it were, and those which were timed to the rowers of an ordinary boat" (Scott's note).

410. at Beltane, *i.e.*, in May; see note on l. 319.

416. Menteith. See note on l. 89.

Breadalbane. A district north of Loch Lomond and around Loch Tay.

419. Glen Fruin. A valley to the south-west of Loch Lomond; at the entrance of this glen stand the ruins of the castle of *Bannochar*.

420. Slogan. The battle cry of the Highlanders.

421. Glen Luss is another valley on the western shore of Loch Lomond.

Ross-dhu is situated on the western shore of the same Loch.

422. The reference in this and the preceding lines is to an event which actually took place some sixty years after the supposed date of the events of the poem. Scott gives the following account of it: "The Lennox, as the district is called, which encircles the lower extremity of Loch Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake and the neighbouring district of Loch Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity, of which the noted conflict of Glen-fruin is a celebrated instance. This was a clan-battle, in which the Macgregors, headed by Allaster Macgregor, chief of the clan, encountered the sept of Colquhouns, commanded by Sir Humphry Col-

quhoun of Luss. It is on all hands allowed that the action was desperately fought, and that the Colquhouns were defeated with great slaughter, leaving two hundred of their name dead upon the field. But popular tradition has added other horrors to the tale. It is said that Sir Humphry Colquhoun, who was on horseback, escaped to the castle of Benechra, or Banochra, and was next day dragged out and murdered by the victorious Macgregors in cold blood. The consequences of the battle of Glen-fruin were very calamitous to the family of Macgregor, who had already been considered as an unruly clan. The widows of the slain Colquhouns, sixty, it is said, in number, appeared in doleful procession before the king at Stirling, each riding upon a white palfrey, and bearing in her hand the bloody shirt of her husband displayed upon a pike. James IV. was so much moved by the complaints of this 'choir of mourning dames,' that he let loose his vengeance against the Macgregors, without either bounds or moderation. The very name of the clan was proscribed, and those by whom it had been borne were given up to sword and fire, and absolutely hunted down by bloodhounds like wild beasts. Argyle and the Campbells, on the one hand, Montrose, with the Grahames and Buchanans, on the other, are said to have been the chief instruments in suppressing this devoted clan. The Clan-Gregor being thus driven to utter despair, seem to have renounced the laws from the benefit of which they were excluded, and their depredations produced new acts of council, confirming the severity of their proscription, which had only the effect of rendering them still more united and desperate. It is a most extraordinary proof of the ardent and invincible spirit of clanship that, notwithstanding the repeated proscriptions providently ordained by the Legislature, 'for the *timeous preventing* the disorders and oppression that may fall out by the said name and clan of Macgregors and their followers,' they were in 1715 and 1745 a potent clan, and continue to subsist as a distinct and numerous race" (Scott's note).

426. **Leven-glen.** The valley of the Leven which connects Loch Lomond with the Clyde.

431. The reference is to Ellen.

450. **shun** is the infinitive.

471. **pious**, used here not in its narrower sense, as referring to the obligations of religion only, but in the broader sense of the Latin *pius* (cf. Virgil's phrase *pius Aeneas*), *dutiful*, obedient to domestic and social,

as well as religions, claims; cf. Gray's *W/hgg*, l. 90: "Some pious drops the closing eye requires."

493, ff. The earl recalls an incident of his past life which is narrated in a long passage from Pitseottie, quoted by Scott in his notes to the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. In the year 1526 "the Earl of Angus and the rest of the Douglasses ruled all which they liked, and no man durst say the contrary; wherefore the king [James V., then a minor] was heavily displeased and would fain have been out of their hands, if he might by any way; and to that effect wrote a quiet and secret letter with his own hand, and sent it to the Laird of Buccleuch, beseeching him that he would come with his kin and friends, and all the force that he might be, and meet him at Melross, at his home-passing, and there to take him out of the Douglasses hands." . . . The Laird of Buccleuch, accordingly, assembled his friends and attempted to rescue the king at Halidon Hill, but was defeated in the ensuing battle, and put to flight. "The Earl of Angus returned [from the pursuit] with great merriness and victory, and thanked God that he had saved him from that chance, and passed with the king to Melross, where they remained all that night."

"This incident would identify the exile with the Earl of Angus, who married the widow of James IV.; but we learn from Canto V, l. 525, that he was the uncle of this banished Earl, and the poet adds in a note that he was 'an entirely imaginary personage'" (Minto).

495. See note on line 141 above.

497. **Percy's Norman pennon.** This was a trophy of victory won in 1388 by a former Douglas. The famous battle of Otterbourne, or Chevy Chase, arose out of an attempt by Hotspur to recover the banner of his house.

504. **the waned crescent.** The *crescent* was the badge of the Buccleuch family, whom he had defeated. See note on line 493, ff.

506. **Blantyre** was a priory, of which the ruins are still standing, on the Clyde, opposite Bothwell Castle.

513. **out-beggars.** By surpassing (*out-*) makes beggarly or worthless all I have lost.

516-7. The rhyme here is perfect if the obsolete pronunciation of "heard" as *heerd* (still used among the uneducated) is retained; cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, ll. 25 and 27, where the same two words rhyme.

523-5. Hawks were usually carried on the wrist, with their eyes hooded; the hood was removed whenever they were to be let loose in pursuit of their prey.

527. **Goddess.** The MS. has "huntress"; the reference is to Diana.

541. **ptarmigan.** See note on I, 440. In winter the plumage of the ptarmigan is *white*.

548. **Ben-Lomond.** The highest mountain on the shore of the Loch (3,192 feet).

549. Without panting.

574. **Glenfinlas.** A wooded valley between Ben-an and Ben-ledi, the entrance to which is between Lochs Achray and Vennachar.

577. **a royal ward.** Malcolm (who is a purely fictitious personage) is represented as head of the Graemes; but still a minor, and hence under the guardianship of the king.

583. **Strath-Endrick.** The valley of the river Endrick, which flows into Loch Lomond from the east.

606. **glozing words.** Words which give a deceptively pleasing interpretation; there are two words *gloss* in English, viz., *gloss* 'an interpretation,' and *gloss* 'lustre,' and occasionally, as here, the meaning seems to arise from a confusion of the two words.

615. "In 1529, James V. made a convention at Edinburgh for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority, and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances. Accordingly, he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, consisting of his principal nobility and their followers, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the intervals of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick Forest, where he hanged, over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of King of the Border. But the most noted victim of justice, during that expedition, was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, famous in Scottish song, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the king, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot.

The effect of this severity was such, that, as the vulgar expressed it, 'the rushbush kept the cow,' and 'thereafter was great peace and rest a long time, wherethrough the King had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick Forest in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the King as good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife.'—*Pitscottie's History*, p. 153" (Scott's note).

623. Cf. *Genesis*, iv, 10: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

623-6. **Meggat's mead.** The meadows along the banks of the Meggat, a tributary of the Yarrow. The **Ettrick** and **Yarrow** flow through Selkirkshire into the Tweed. The **Teviot** is in Roxburghshire and empties into the Tweed near Kelso.

624. **braes.** A Scotch word meaning 'steep banks.'

632. **pretext.** The accent is on the second syllable, as in *Coriolanus*, V, vi, 20.

634. "James was in fact equally attentive to restrain rapine and feudal oppression in every part of his dominions. 'The king past to the Isles, and there held justice courts, and punished both thief and traitor according to their demerit. And also he caused great men to show their holdings, wherethrough he found many of the said lands in non-entry; the which he confiscate and brought home to his own use, and afterwards annexed them to the crown, as ye shall hear. Syne brought many of the great men of the Isles captive with him, such as Mudyart, M'Connel, M'Loyd of the Lewes, M'Neil, M'Lane, M'Intosh, John Mudyart, M'Kay, M'Kenzie, with many other that I cannot rehearse at this time. Some of them he put in ward and some in court, and some he took pledges for good rule in time coming. So he brought the Isles, both north and south, in good rule and peace; wherefore he had great profit, service, and obedience of the people a long time thereafter; and as long as he had the heads of the country in subjection, they lived in great peace and rest, and there was great riches and policy by the king's justice.'—*Pitscottie*, p. 152" (Scott's note).

638. [Give me] your counsel in the streight (strait, difficulty) which I reveal.

659. See note on l. 200 above.

662. See note on I, 127.

678. **The Links of Forth.** *Links* means the windings of a river,

and also the land lying among the windings. The *Links* of Forth is the district between Stirling and Alloa, where the river winds much.

679. Stirling's porch. The castle at Stirling was a favourite residence of the Scotch kings.

699. startler. 'One who is startled.' Scott is scarcely justified in using such a formation in this passive sense.

702. battled=battlemented, as in VI, 7 below.

708. astound. "Astounded; this contraction of the participle was formerly not uncommon in verbs ending in *d* and *t*. Thus in Shakespeare we find the participles *bloat* (*Ham.*, III, iv, 182), *enshield* (*Measure for Measure*, II, iv, 80), *taint* (*I Henry VI.*, V, iii, 183), etc." (Rolfe.) But this explanation of Rolfe's is probably wrong here; Murray's *New English Dictionary* shows that there was an earlier verb, *astone*, of which *astound* is the past participle; the more modern verb *astound* is a derivative of this earlier past participle, used here by Scott.

757. chequer'd shroud, *i.e.*, his tartan plaid; *shroud* originally means a garment; cf. II, 254, with note.

763. "Lockhart quotes here a criticism of Jeffrey's:—'There is something foppish and out of character in Malcolm's rising to lead out Ellen from her own parlour; and the sort of wrestling match that takes place between the rival chieftains on the occasion is humiliating and indecorous.' Roderick Dhu apparently agreed with the first proposition, and Douglas with the second" (Minto).

parting. See note on l. 94 above.

the Græme. The definite article is thus used, both in Ireland and Scotland, as a sort of title of honour to indicate the chief of a clan.

774. See ll. 318-20 above.

786. "The author has to apologize for the inadvertent appropriation of a whole line from the tragedy of Douglas: 'I hold the first who strikes my foe.'" (Scott's note.)

795. brands. "A pet word with Scott. Note how often it has been already used in the poem" (Rolfe).

801. "Hardihood was in every respect so essential to the character of a Highlander, that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter which could be thrown upon him" (Scott's note).

804. **fell.** Hill.

805. **lackey.** For similar use, cf. *Comus*, 455 : "A thousand liveried angels lackey her," and *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iv, 36 : "Like a vagabond flag upon the stream, Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide."

809. **henchman.** "'This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron. An English officer being in company with a certain chieftain, and several other Highland gentlemen, near Killichumen, had an argument with the *great man*; and both being well warmed with usky, at last the dispute grew very hot. A youth who was henchman, not understanding one word of English, imagined his chief was insulted, and thereupon drew his pistol from his side, and snapped it at the officer's head: but the pistol missed fire, otherwise it is more than probable he might have suffered death from the hand of that little vermin. But it is very disagreeable to an Englishman over a bottle, with the Highlanders, to see every one of them have his gilly, that is, his servant, standing behind him all the while, let what will be the subject of conversation.'—*Letters from Scotland*, ii, 159" (Scott's note).

831. **Fiery Cross.** See on III, 18, below.

846. **point.** Cf. Bacon, *Vicissitude of Things*: "pointing days for pitched fields," *Faerie Queen*, I, ix, 41:

And he, that points the sentinel his room,
Doth license him depart at sound of morning doom.

CANTO III.

3. **legends store.** See on I, 547.

17. **gathering sound.** The sound, or signal, for gathering; cf. II, 362.

18. **the Fiery Cross.** "When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Orcan Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to

a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. The late Alexander Stewart, Esq., of Invernahyle, described to me his having sent round the Fiery Cross through the district of Appine, during the same commotion. The coast was threatened by a descent from two English frigates, and the flower of the young men were with the army of Prince Charles Edward, then in England; yet the summons was so effectual, that even old age and childhood obeyed it; and a force was collected in a few hours, so numerous and so enthusiastic, that all attempt at the intended diversion upon the country of the absent warriors was in prudence abandoned, as desperate. This practice, like some others, is common to the Highlanders with the ancient Scandinavians" (Scott's note).

19, ff. Mr. Rolfe quotes as follows from Mr. Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, iii, 278: "And thus Nature becomes dear to Scott in a three-fold way: dear to him, first, as containing those remains or memories of the past, which he cannot find in cities, and giving hope of Prætorian mound or knight's grave in every green slope and shade of its desolate places; dear, secondly, in its moorland liberty, which has for him just as high a charm as the fenced garden had for the mediæval; . . . and dear to him, finally, in that perfect beauty, denied alike in cities and in men, for which every modern heart had begun at last to thirst, and Scott's, in its freshness and power, of all men's most earnestly. And in this love of beauty, observe that the love of *colour* is a leading element, his healthy mind being incapable of losing, under any modern false teaching, its joy in brilliancy of hue. . . . In general, if he does not mean to say much about things, the *one* character which he will give is colour, using it with the utmost perfect mastery and faith-

fulness." "After giving many illustrations of Scott's use of colour in his poetry, Ruskin quotes the present passage, which he says is 'still more interesting, because it has *no form* in it *at all* except in one word (*chalice*), but wholly composes its imagery either of colour, or of that delicate half-believed life which we have seen to be so important an element in modern landscape. Two more considerations,' he adds, 'are, however, suggested by the above passage. The first, that the love of natural history, excited by the continual attention now given to all wild landscape, heightens reciprocally the interest of that landscape, and becomes an important element in Scott's description, leading him to finish, down to the minutest speckling of breast, and slightest shade of attributed emotion, the portraiture of birds and animals; in strange opposition to Homer's slightly named 'sea-crows, who have care of the works of the sea,' and Dante's singing-birds, of undefined species. Compare carefully the 2nd and 3rd stanzas of *Rokeby*. The second point I have to note is Scott's habit of drawing a slight *moral* from every scene, . . . and that this slight moral is almost always melancholy. Here he has stopped short without entirely expressing it:—

'The mountain-shadows . . .
 lie
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.'

His completed thought would be, that these future joys, like the mountain-shadows, were never to be attained. It occurs fully uttered in many other places. He seems to have been constantly rebuking his own worldly pride and vanity, but never purposefully:—

'The foam-globes on her eddies ride,
 Thick as the schemes of human pride
 That down life's current drive amain,
 As frail, as frothy, and as vain.'

Ruskin adds, among other illustrations, the reference to 'foxglove and nightshade,' in i, 218, 219 above." (Rolfe.)

39. **cushat dove.** The ring-dove or wood-pigeon; cf. Wordsworth's "O nightingale thou surely art," 2nd stanza (see p. 201 *ante*).

44. **Abrupt.** This refers to the sudden stops and turns in his pacing.

62. **rowan.** The mountain ash.

71. Scott has a long note to give some historic justification for the character of the Hermit; but the cases he cites, are not strikingly

parallel, and the extremely wild and fantastic traits of Brian are the birth of Scott's own imagination. He had a weakness for fantastic figures, *e.g.*, Norna in the *Pirate*, Meg Merrilies in *Guy Mannering*, the Goblin Page in the *Lay*, etc.

74. **Benharrow.** A mountain near the head of Lake Lomond.

87. **Strath** is a glen on a larger scale.

91. "The legend which follows," he says, "is not of the author's invention. It is possible he may differ from modern critics, in supposing that the records of human superstition, if peculiar to, and characteristic of, the country in which the scene is laid, are a legitimate subject of poetry. He gives, however, a ready assent to the narrower proposition which condemns all attempts of an irregular and disordered fancy to excite terror, by accumulating a train of fantastic and incoherent horrors, whether borrowed from all countries, and patched upon a narrative belonging to one which knew them not, or derived from the author's own imagination" (Scott's note). Scott proceeds to quote a tradition concerning a founder of the church of Kilmalie which resembles the story of Brian's birth.

104. **field-fare.** A species of thrush.

108. **flush'd and full.** "Flush'd describes the purple colour of the heath-bell; *full*=full-blown" (Stuart). But it seems probable that the reference in the word as here used is rather to *fullness* of bloom than to colour; cf. 384 below, where Stuart interprets *flushing* as "full bloom"; again in the *Heart of Midlothian*: "I thought of the bonny bit thorn that our father rooted out o' the yard last May, when it had a' the flush of blossoms on it," and again in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, l. 128: "For all the bloomy flush of life is fled."

114. "The *snood*, or riband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch, toy, or coif*, when she passed by marriage into the matron state" (Scott's note).

136. **The cloister, etc.; i.e.,** he became a monk.

138. **sable-lettered page.** "Black-letter" pages; *black-letter* is the name technically applied to the old-English characters employed in early MSS. and printing.

142. **cabala.** Originally the traditions handed down by word of

mouth from Moses to the Jewish Rabbis ; hence, as here, applied to anything secret and mysterious.

149, ff. “In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the Founder of the Church of Kilmalie, the author has endeavoured to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce, in a barbarous age, on the person to whom it related. It seems likely that he must have become a fanatic or an impostor, or that mixture of both which forms a more frequent character than either of them, as existing separately. In truth, mad persons are frequently more anxious to impress upon others a faith in their visions, than they are themselves confirmed in their reality ; as, on the other hand, it is difficult for the most cool-headed impostor long to personate an enthusiast, without in some degree believing what he is so eager to have believed. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always imbued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The River-demon, or the River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forbode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers ; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action : it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession with all its attendants. The ‘noontide hag,’ called in Gaelic *Glaslich*, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin, dressed in antique armour, and having one hand covered with blood, called from that circumstance, *Lhamdearg*, or Red-hand, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemureus. Other spirits of the desert, all frightful in shape and malignant in disposition, are believed to frequent different mountains and glens of the Highlands, where any unusual appearance, produced by mist, or the strange lights that are sometimes thrown upon particular objects, never fails to present an apparition to the imagination of the solitary and melancholy mountaineer” (Scott’s note).

166. **Alpine’s lineage.** See on II, 213.

168. **The fatal Ben-Shie’s boding scream.** “Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. That of Grant of

Grant was called *May Moulloch*, and appeared in the form of a girl, who had her arm covered with hair. Grant of Rothiemureus had an attendant called *Bodach-an-dun*, or the Ghost of the Hill; and many other examples might be mentioned. The *Ban-Schie* implies a female Fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle and streaming-hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

The death of the head of a Highland family is also sometimes supposed to be announced by a chain of lights of different colours, called *Dr'eug*, or death of the Druid. The direction which it takes, marks the place of the funeral" (Scott's note).

169. **Sounds, too, had come.** "A presage of the kind alluded to in the text is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye, as well as the ear, may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena with which history abounds. Such an apparition is said to have been witnessed upon the side of Southfell mountain, between Penrith and Keswick, upon the 23rd June, 1744, by two persons, William Laucaster, of Blakehills, and Daniel Stricket, his servant, whose attestation to the fact, with a full account of the apparition, dated the 21st July, 1745, is printed in Clarke's 'Survey of the Lakes.' The apparition consisted of several troops of horse moving in regular order, with a steady rapid motion, making a curved sweep around the fell, and seeming to the spectators to disappear over the ridge of the mountain. Many persons witnessed this phenomenon, and observed the last, or last but one, of the supposed troop, occasionally leave his rank, and pass at a gallop to the front, when he resumed the same steady pace. This curious appearance, making the necessary allowance for imagination, may be perhaps sufficiently accounted for by optical deception.—*Survey of the Lakes*, p. 25" (Scott's note).

171. **shingly.** Covered with gravel (shingle); see note on V, 46.

187. **grisly.** See note on I, 704.

191. "**Inch-Cailliach**, the Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most

beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain. The burial-ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighbouring clans. The monuments of the lairds of Macgregor, and of other families claiming a descent from the old Scottish King Alpine, are most remarkable. The Highlanders are as zealous of their rights of sepulture as may be expected from a people whose whole laws and government, if clanship can be called so, turned upon the single principle of family descent. 'May his ashes be scattered on the water,' was one of the deepest and most solemn imprecations which they used against an enemy" (Scott's note). See a detailed description of the funeral ceremonies of a Highland chieftain in the *Fair Maid of Perth*, chaps. x and xi.

198. "The ritual is very elaborately studied; it is worth the reader's while to realize the full force of the symbolism. The choice of the crosslet from the yew of the clan's sacred burial ground, the kindling of its points in the fire, the quenching of the fire in blood—each of these acts has its significance plainly declared by the officiating priest" (Minto).

212. **strook.** Milton uses the same form in *Hymn on the Nativity*, l. 95.

223. **fell.** Hill.

237. **volumed flame.** Stuart interprets 'voluminous,' 'vast,' but the meaning is 'in volumes,' *i.e.* in rounded masses (*volume* means originally 'a roll,' from Lat. *volvo*); cf. the common expression "volumes of smoke" and Byron's *Siege of Corinth*:

With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one white sky of sulphurous hue.

245. "The whole of this stanza is very impressive; the mingling of the *children's* curses is the climax of horror. Note the meaning of the triple curse. The cross is of ancestral yew—the defaulter is cut off from communion with his clan; it is seared with fire—the fire shall destroy his dwelling; it is dipped in blood—his heart's blood is to be shed." (Taylor.)

253. See note on 622 below.

255. See note on 644 below.

279. **by this sign**, *i.e.*, by the cross.

286. **Lanrick mead** is on the north side of Loch Vennachar, near its western end.

300. **the dun deer's hide**. "The present *brogue* of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod is a matter altogether out of the question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards, a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well known epithet of *Redshanks*. The process is very accurately described by one Elder (himself a Highlander) in the project for a union between England and Scotland, addressed to Henry VIII. 'We go a-hunting, and after that we have slain red-deer, we flay off the skin by-and-by, and setting of our bare-foot on the inside thereof, for want of cunning shoemakers, by your grace's pardon, we play the cobblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof as shall reach up to our ankles, pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water may repass where it enters, and stretching it up with a strong throng of the same above our said ankles. So, and please your noble grace, we make our shoes. Therefore, we using such manner of shoes, the rough hairy side outwards, in your grace's dominions of England, we be called *Roughfooted Scots*.' *Pinkerton's History*, vol. ii, p. 397" (Scott's note).

304. **steepy**. Cf. IV, 374; the word is also found in Shakespeare, *Timon*, I, i, 75.

309. **questing**. Seeking (the game).

310. **scaur**. A bare cliff; the same word as *scar* in Tennyson's

"O sweet and far from cliff and scar."

332. **cheer**. In its original sense of 'countenance,' 'look'; cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, ii, 96: "pale of cheer."

344. **bosky**. Bushy; cf. *Tempest*, IV, i, 81: "My bosky acres, and my unshrubb'd down."

349. **Duncraggan's huts** are between Lochs Achray and Vennachar, near the Brig of Turk.

357. Scott wrote originally 'Tis woman's scream, 'tis childhood's wail.' Mr. Rolfe says: "Yell may seem at first too strong a word here, but it is in keeping with the people and the times described. Besides Scott was familiar with old English poetry, in which it was often used

where a modern writer would choose another word. Cf. Surrey, *Virgil's Aeneid*: "With wailing great and women's shrill yelling"; and Gascoigne, *De Profundis*:

'From depth of doole wherein my soul doth dwell,

O gracious God, to thee I cry and yell."

369. The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ululatus* of the Romans, and the *Uluoo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death. The *Coronach* has for some years past been superseded at funerals by the use of the bagpipe; and that also is, like many other Highland peculiarities, falling into disuse, unless in remote districts" (Scott's note).

386. **correi**. A Gaelic word. "The hollow side of a hill" (Scott's note).

387. **cumber**. Trouble, perplexity; found in early Scotch writers like Dunbar and Lyndesay, also in Fairfax's *Tasso*, ii, 73: "Thus fade thy helps, and thus thy cumber spring"; cf. *Fair Maid of Perth*, chap. xvi: "So the Fair City is quit of him and his cumber."

388. **Red hand**. With a hand red with blood.

394. **Stumah**. "*Faithful* ; the name of a dog" (Scott).

439. **hest**. Behest, command; a word used only in poetry; cf. *Tempest*, III, i, 37: "I have broke your hest to say so."

452. "Inspection of the provincial map of Perthshire, or any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which, in exercise of my poetical privilege, I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain, and which, at the period of my romance, was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine; a clan the most unfortunate, and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, nor least brave, of the tribes of the Gael. The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. From thence, it passes towards Callander, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire.

Tombea and Arnandave, or Armandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strath-Gartney" (Scott's note).

453. **Strath Ire.** A valley between Lochs Lubnaig and Voil. Both in the poem and in his note on l. 452, Scott seems to apply the name of Strath Ire to the valley of the Leny; it is in the latter valley, about half a mile from the southern end of Loch Lubnaig, that the ruins of the chapel of St. Bride stand.

458. **Teith's young waters.** The Leny is a branch of the Teith.

465. **sympathetic eye.** His eye grew dizzy in sympathy with the whirling motion of the waters.

478. **tide.** Time; cf. *holytide* (VI, 63, below), *Christmas-tide*, *even-tide*, etc., also *Deserted Village*, l. 209: "terms and tides | resage."

485. **coif-clad.** See note on l. 114 above; as also for *snooded*.

541. **brae.** See note on II, 64.

570. "It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. This simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be 'like fire to heather set'" (Scott's note).

Balquidder. A village near the eastern end of Loch Voil.

577. **coil.** Bustle, confusion; cf. *Tempest*, I, ii, 207:

Who was so firm, so constant, that this coil
Would not infect his reason?

578-82. The two Lochs mentioned are on the course of the Balvaig, which empties into Loch Lubnaig. *Strath Gartney* is the north shore of Loch Katrine.

600. "The deep and implicit respect paid by the Highland clansmen to their chief, rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. One solemn mode of

swearing was by kissing the *dirk*, imprecating upon themselves death by that, or a similar weapon, if they broke their vow. But for oaths in the usual form, they are said to have had little respect. As for the reverence due to the chief, it may be guessed from the following odd example of a Highland point of honour:—

“The clan whereto the above-mentioned tribe belongs, is the only one I have heard of, which is without a chief; that is, being divided into families, under several chieftains, without any particular patriarch of the whole name. And this is a great approach, as may appear from an affair that fell out at my table, in the Highlands, between one of that name and a Cameron. The provocation given by the latter was—‘Name your chief.’—The return of it at once was—‘You are a fool.’ They went out next morning, but having early notice of it, I sent a small party of soldiers after them, which, in all probability, prevented some barbarous mischief that might have ensued; for the chiefless Highlander, who is himself a petty chieftain, was going to the place appointed with a small sword and pistol, whereas the Cameron (an old man) took with him only his broadsword, according to the agreement. When all was over, and I had, at least seemingly, reconciled them, I was told the words, of which I seemed to think but slightly, were, to one of the clan, the greatest of all provocations.’—*Letters from Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 221” (Scott’s note).

606-10. All the places mentioned are in the Forth Valley (see map); “these are points in the territory of Roderick’s southern neighbours, who might have seized the opportunity to take him in the rear, when he threw his men down the valley of the Teith against the king” (Minto).

616. *cruel*, because she had rejected his suit.

622. “This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr. Alexander Campbell, may have originally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the *Urisk*, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, pre-

cisely that of the Grecian Satyr. The *Urisk* seems not to have inherited, with the form, the petulance of the sylvan deity of the classics : his occupation, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's Lubber Fiend, or of the Scottish Brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance. 'The *Urisks*,' says Dr. Graham, 'were a set of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the Brownies, could be gained over by kind attention, to perform the drudgery of the farm, and it was believed that many of the families in the Highlands had one of the order attached to it. They were supposed to be dispersed over the Highlands, each in his own wild recess, but the solemn stated meetings of the order were regularly held in this Cave of Benvenue. This current superstition, no doubt, alludes to some circumstance in the ancient history of this country.' *Scenery on the Southern Confines of Perthshire*, p. 19, 1806.—It must be owned that the *Coir*, or Den, does not, in its present state, meet our ideas of a subterraneous grotto, or cave, being only a small and narrow cavity, among huge fragments of rocks rudely piled together. But such a scene is liable to convulsions of nature, which a Lowlander cannot estimate, and which may have choked up what was originally a cavern. At least the name and tradition warrant the author of a fictitious tale to assert its having been such at the remote period in which this scene is laid" (Scott's note).

639. Mr. Rolfe notes that here and in l. 28 we have an illustration of what is comparatively rare in figurative language—the use of the immaterial to exemplify the material—the contrary course being the natural one. Shelley, in his preface to the *Prometheus*, draws attention to the fact that he frequently resorts to this sort of figurative illustration.

643. **chafed.** Cf. *Julius Caesar*, I, ii, 101 : "The troubled Tiber chafing with his shores," and *Lear*, IV, vi, 21 : "The murmuring surge That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes."

656. **satyrs.** "The *Urisk*, or Highland Satyr" (Scott's note).

664. **Beal-nam-bo.** "Bealach-nam-bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the *Coir-nan-Uriskin*, treated of in a former note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive" (Scott's note).

672. "A Highland chief, being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his bodyguards, called *Luichttach*, picked from his

clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person. These, according to their deserts, were sure to share abundantly in the profusion of his hospitality. It is recorded, for example, by tradition, that Allan MacLean, chief of that clan, happened upon a time to hear one of these favourite retainers observe to his comrade, that their chief grew old—‘Whence do you infer that?’ replied the other.—‘When was it,’ rejoined the first, ‘that a soldier of Allan’s was obliged, as I am now, not only to eat the flesh from the bone, but even to tear off the inner skin, or filament?’ The hint was quite sufficient, and MacLean next morning, to relieve his followers from such dire necessity, undertook an inroad on the mainland, the ravages of which altogether effaced the memory of his former expeditions for the like purpose.

Our officer of Engineers, so often quoted, has given us a distinct list of the domestic officers who, independent of *Luichttach*, or *gardes de corps*, belonged to the establishment of a Highland Chief. These are, 1. *The Henchman* (see note on II, 809). 2. *The Bard* (see note on II, 7). 3. *Bludier*, or spokesman. 4. *Gillie-more*, or sword-bearer, alluded to in the text. 5. *Gillie-casflue*, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. *Gillie-constraine*, who leads the chief’s horse. 7. *Gillie-Trushanarinsh*, the baggage man. 8. *The Piper*. 9. The piper’s gillie or attendant, who carries the bagpipe. Although this appeared, naturally enough, very ridiculous to an English officer, who considered the master of such a retinue as no more than an English gentleman of £500 a year, yet in the circumstances of the chief, whose strength and importance consisted in the number and attachment of his followers, it was of the last consequence, in point of policy, to have in his gift subordinate offices, which called immediately round his person those who were most devoted to him, and, being of value in their estimation, were also the means of rewarding them” (Scott’s note).

699-700. It was a common superstition that ghosts haunted places where treasures were buried. Horatio in his adjuration of the ghost in *Hamlet* says :

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death, etc.

713. “The metrical peculiarity of this song is that the rhymes of the even lines of the first quatrain are taken up by those of the odd lines in the second, and that they are the same in all three stanzas” (Taylor).

Ave Maria. Hail Mary. The words occur in a Latin prayer to the Virgin and are suggested by the salutation of the Angel, *Luke*, i, 28.

757. **Lanrick height.** Above Lanrick mead ; see l. 286, with note.

772. **eagle plume.** The *eagle* plume marked the chieftain.

777. **Bochastle's plain.** See on I, 106.

CANTO IV.

1. "The Spenserian stanzas in all the other Cantos are reserved for the poet's reflections. Though the reflection here is put into the mouth of young Norman, torn from his bride by war at the church door, it applies also to the Knight of Snowdoun's gallant adventure after Ellen, which is the main theme of the Canto" (Minto).

5. **wilding.** *Wilding* means properly a wild plant, but is here used as an adjective. Cf. *Faerie Queen*, III, vii, 17 : "Oft from the forest did he wildings bring" ; Shelley, *Queen Mab* : "These are thine early wilding flowers."

10. **conceit** originally means 'something conceived' ; here it is used in the sense—especially common in Elizabethan literature—of an ingenious or poetical thought.

19. **Braes of Doune.** The undulating region between Callander and Doune on the north side of the Teith.

36. **bourne.** This is the word which is found in modern prose English in the form *bound*, in such phrases as 'He is bound for the West.' The word means 'ready,' 'prepared' ; and hence is here tautological.

42. **bout.** Properly a turn, hence may here mean 'a turn in events,' but probably it has the more ordinary sense of a contest ; so Scott in *Woodstock* speaks of a "bout at single stick."

55. **advised.** 'Thought on,' 'planned' ; cf. *Merchant of Venice*, I, i, 142 : "with more advised watch."

63. **Taghairm.** "The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapt up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation, he revolved in his mind the question proposed ; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagina-

tion, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt the desolate recesses. In some of these Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities, and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds, after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelary deity of the stone, and, as such, to be, if possible, punctually complied with" (Scott's note).

67. "I know not if it be worth observing, that this passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old Highland Kern or Ketteran, as they are called. He used to narrate the merry doings of the good old time when he was follower of Rob Roy MacGregor. This leader, on one occasion, thought proper to make a descent upon the lower part of the Loch Lomond district, and summoned all the heritors and farmers to meet at the Kirk of Drymen, to pay him blackmail, *i.e.*, tribute for forbearance and protection. As this invitation was supported by a band of thirty or forty stout fellows, only one gentleman, an ancestor, if I mistake not, of the present Mr. Graham of Gartmore, ventured to decline compliance. Rob Roy instantly swept his land of all he could drive away, and among the spoil was a bull of the old Scottish wild breed, whose ferocity occasioned great plague to the Ketterans. 'But ere we had reached the Row of Dinnan,' said the old man, 'a child might have scratched his ears'" (Scott's note).

68. **merry-men.** "A name given especially to freebooters such as the followers of Roderick: cf. 'Robin Hood and his merry men.' The epithet may express their careless and improvidently happy disposition. Scott, however, asserts that *merry* in this phrase means *famous, renowned*, and that merry-men means, not men of mirth, but men of renown" (Stuart).

Gallangad is near Kilmarnock on the Catter Burn, a tributary of the Endrick.

73, ff. "Skeat explains 'kerne' as 'an Irish soldier,' quoting from Spenser's View of Ireland, and deriving from Irish *cearn*, a man. Scott treats the word as identical with *cateran*, the Lowland Scotch name for a Highland robber, from which he derives Loch Katrine. The mention of *Bealmaha* and *Dinnan's Row* (Rowardennan), familiar to tourists as piers on the steamer track on the east side of Loch Lomond, shows that the bull was taken in a Lennox foray. In giving the history of the sacrificial bull the poet follows Homeric prece-

dent, and it was a habit of his own, common to him probably with ancient bards, to celebrate localities familiar to his friends" (Minto).

84. the Hero's Targe. "There is a rock so named in the Forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself by letting down a flagon tied to a string into the black pool beneath the fall" (Scott's note).

98. broke. "'Quartered.'—Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking*, the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. 'There is a little gristle,' says Turberville, 'which is upon the spoon of the brisket, which we call the raven's bone; and I have seen in some places a raven so wont and accustomed to it, that she would never fail to croak and cry for it all the time you were in breaking up of the deer, and would not depart till she had it.' In the very ancient metrical romance of Sir Tristrem, that peerless knight, who is said to have been the very deviser of all rules of chase, did not omit the ceremony:—

'The rauen he yaued his yiftes
Sat on the fourched tre.'—*Sir Tristrem*.

"The raven might also challenge his rights by the Book of St. Alban's, for thus says Dame Juliana Berners:—

'—————Slitteth anon
The belly to the side, from the corbyn bone;
That is corbyn's fee, at the death he will be.'

"Johnson, in 'The Sad Shepherd,' gives a more poetical account of the same ceremony:—

'Marian.—He that undoes him,
Doth cleave the brisket bone, upon the spoon
Of which a little gristle grows—you call it—
Robin Hood. —The raven's bone.
Marian.—Now o'er head sat a raven
On a sere bough, a grown, great bird, and hoarse,
Who, all the while the deer was breaking up,
So croak'd and cried for't, as all the huntsmen,
Especially old Scathlock, thought it ominous.' "

(Scott's note).

115. **rouse.** Cf. *Macbeth*, V, v, 12 :

The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek, and my fill of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in't.

132-3. "Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion that, on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party" (Scott's note).

152-3. "The coat of arms of the Earl of Moray has three silver stars. The Mar coat of arms has a black band across it, or, in heraldic language a *sable pale*" (Masterman).

157. See note on l. 36 above.

160. **of Earn.** Inhabiting the district about Loch Earn (see map).

164. **shaggy.** The word Trosachs means 'bristling.'

174. **stance.** A Scotch word meaning 'station.'

197-8. Cf. *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, II, viii :

He knew by the streamers that shot so bright
That the spirits were riding the northern light.

and Tennyson, *Morte d'Arthur* : "Shot like a streamer of the northern morn."

223. **trow'd.** 'Believed' ; cf. *Luke*, xvii, 9 : "Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him ? I trow not."

231. **Cambus-Kenneth's fane.** An abbey on the other side of the Forth from Stirling.

243. "Various clans have characteristic epithets in popular repute, sometimes alliterative, sometimes not, as 'the gallant Grahams,' 'the haughty Hamiltons,' 'the trusty Boyds,' 'the lucky Duffs'" (Minto).

250. **Sooth.** Cf. note on I, 476.

261. "This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad, which occurs in the *Kæmpe Viser*, a collection of heroic songs, first published in 1591 and reprinted in 1695, inscribed by Anders Sofrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia, Queen of Denmark" (Scott's note). This is a close imitation of the ancient ballad, of which species Scott's long metrical romances like *Lay* and the *Lady of the Lake* are a modern development.

262. **mavis and merle.** Northern English and Lowland Scotch names for thrush and blackbird.

266. **wold.** The open country, as opposed to *wood* ; a favourite word with Tennyson, cf. *Lady of Shalott* :

Long fields of barley and of rye
That clothe the wold and meet the sky.

and *Miller's Daughter* :

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below.

268. **wont.** Cf. note on I, 408.

274. **glaive.** A poetical word for 'sword.'

277. **pall.** Originally a cloak (lat. *pallium*), then used also for a rich material out of which cloaks were made ; so in *Faerie Queen*, I, vii, 16 : "He gave her gold and purple pall to wear," and often in old ballads :

His robe was neither green nor grey,
Bot alle it was of riche pall.

283. **darkling.** In the dark ; a poetical word ; cf. *Paradise Lost*, iii, 39 : "As the wakeful bird sits darkling."

285. **vair.** A species of fur used in the middle ages.

286. **sheen.** See note on I, 208.

291. The placing of the naturally unaccented syllable (in "Richard") in the metrically stressed place is a characteristic license in the naive style of the old ballad.

297. **the moody Elfin King.** Scott in his note on this line quotes from Dr. Graham : "The *Duaine Shi*", or Men of Peace of the Highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish,

repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy in their subterraneous recesses a sort of shadowy happiness, —a tinsel grandeur; which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortality. They are believed to inhabit certain round grassy eminences, where they celebrate their nocturnal festivities by the light of the moon. About a mile beyond the source of the Forth above Lochcon, there is a place called *Coirshian*, or the cove of the Men of Peace, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their residence. In the neighbourhood are to be seen many round conical eminences; particularly one, near the head of the lake, by the skirts of which many are still afraid to pass after sunset. It is believed that if, on Hallow-eve, any person alone goes round one of these hills nine times, towards the left hand (*sinistrorsum*) a door shall open, by which he will be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race, have been entertained in their secret recesses. There they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets and delicious wines. Their females surpass the daughters of men in beauty. The *seemingly* happy inhabitants pass their time in festivity, and in dancing to notes of the softest music. But unhappy is the mortal who joins in their joys, or ventures to partake of their dainties. By this indulgence he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound down irrevocably to the condition of *Shi'ich*, or Man of Peace."

298. *wonn'd*. Dwelt. See note on I, 408.

301. "It has been already observed that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests, peculiarly jealous of their rights of *vert* and *venison*, as appears from the cause of offence taken, in the original Danish ballad. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern *Duergar*, or dwarfs, to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings. In the huge metrical record of German Chivalry, entitled the *Helden-Buch*, Sir Hildebrand, and the other heroes of whom it treats, are engaged in one of their most desperate adventures, from a rash violation of the rose-garden of an Elfín, or Dwarf King" (Scott's note).

305. This variation in the regular form of the stanza is a common feature in early ballad poetry; in the *Ancient Mariner* Coleridge takes a similar liberty.

306. "As the *Daoine Shi*", or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege as a reason that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy; but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once by observing that the whipcord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour" (Scott's note).

307. "The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession :—

'For I ride on a milk-white steed,
And aye nearest the town;
Because I was a christen'd knight,
They gave me that renown,"

(Scott's note).

313. **part.** See note on II, 94, above.

322. **grisly.** See note on I, 704.

330. **kindly blood.** The blood of thy kind, or kin; cf. *Much Ado*, IV, i, 75: "That fatherly and kindly power that you have in her."

345. "No fact," says Scott in his note, "respecting Fairy-land seems to be better ascertained than the fantastic and illusory nature of their apparent pleasure and splendour."

355. "The subjects of Fairy-land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of *crimping* system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the 'Londe of Faery'" (Scott's note).

371. **Dunfermline grey.** The Abbey of the Grey Friars at Dunfermline in Fifeshire.

374. **steepy**. See note on III, 304.

376. **Lincoln green**. See note on I, 464.

387-8. Cf. *Macbeth*, II, i, 42: "Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going."

bourne. Not meaning *limit* here, but *stream*; cf. *Comus*, 313: "And every bosky bourn from side to side." The common Scotch spelling is *burn*.

392. **scathe**. Harm; cf. *King John*, II, i, 75: "To do offence and scathe in Christendom."

393. **kern**. See on 73 above.

411. **Bochastle**. See on I, 106. It will be noted that Scott accents the word differently in the two passages.

421. **atone**. This use of *atone* instead of *atone for* is not common. The *New English Dictionary* gives some cases, *e.g.*, from Bulwer Lytton: "They endeavoured to atone the loss by the pursuit of Artabazus." For a different use of *atone*, cf. V, 325, with note.

437. **train**. Lure; cf. *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 118:

Devilish Macbeth

By many of these trains has sought to win me
Into his power.

446. For this use of 'as,' cf. II, 56.

473. **reck of**. Care for; a poetical word; cf. Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, VIII, 34, "thon's but a lazy lord, and recks much of thy swinck"; more commonly *reck* without a preposition, as in l. 747 below, and *Hamlet*, "recks not his own reed."

506. **weeds**. Garments; common in older English in this sense, now only in the phrase 'widow's weeds'; cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, ii, 7: "Weeds of Athens he doth wear," Milton, *L'Allegro*, 120, "In weeds of peace."

523. **in better time**. In more prosperous days.

531-2. The **Allan** and **Devan** are two streams which rise in the hills of Perthshire and flow through the plain of Stirling into the Forth.

552. Note the accent of *bridegroom*; in l. 682 below, it has the ordinary accent.

559. "Cf. *Waverley*, chap. xix : 'Matches were then made for running, wrestling, leaping, pitching the bar, and other sports.' 'Pitching the bar' appears to have been much the same as the modern 'throwing the hammer.'" (Stuart.)

567. **batten.** Feed gluttonously on ; cf. *Hamlet*, III, iv, 67 : "batten on this moor."

590. **The toils are pitch'd.** The nets are set ; the same phrase is in Shakespeare, *Lore's Labour Lost*, IV, iii, 2. "In representing this mode of hunting by set toils or nets, into which the deer were driven, as being known to Blanche of Devan, Scott is more historically realistic than in the stag-hunt on horseback in Canto I" (Minto).

594. **stag of ten.** "Having ten branches on his antlers" (Scott's note). Cf. Massinger, *Emperor of the East*, IV, 2 : "He'll make you royal sport ; he is a deer of ten, at least."

617. **thrill'd.** The word *thrill* (*drill* is a variant) means originally 'to pierce' ; Rolfe interprets here 'quivered,' and his interpretation is confirmed by the old ballad *Young Johnstone* :

He hadna weel been out of the stable
And on his saddle set,
Till four and twenty broad arrows
Were thrilling in his heart.

631-2. The blade had penetrated so deep ; cf. Macaulay's *Horatius* :

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain
Ere he wrenched out the steel.

642. **Daggled.** Wet, soaked ; a variant of *dragged* ; cf. *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, I, 316 : "Was daggled by the dashing spray."

657. **shred.** Cut off ; in this sense obsolete, though the noun *shred* is common.

672. **wreak.** Avenge : cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 102 :

To wreak the love I bore my cousin
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him.

686. It was customary for knights to wear some gift which was a *token of favour* ; hence the sense of the word here. Cf. *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, IV, 334 :

With favour in his crest, or glove
Memorial of his ladye-love.

690. is up. Is in progress; cf. *Titus Andronicus*, II, ii, 1: "The hunt is up."

724. Cf. 267 above.

746. slip. Technical term in hunting for letting loose the greyhound from the *slips*, or nooses, by which they were held until sent after the game; cf. *Henry V.*, III, i, 31.

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slip
Straining upon the start.

747. fl. **Who ever reck'd**, etc. "St. John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: 'It was true, we gave law to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an auditory. *Clarendon's History of the Rebellion*. Oxford, 1702, fol. vol. 1, p. 183.'" (Scott's note). For *reck'd*, see l. 473 above.

762. "The Scottish Highlanders, in former times, had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Chartres, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Henry VI, was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands (*au fin fond des Sauvages*). After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish Savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any further preparation than compressing it between two batons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy: and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular. This curious trait of manners was communicated by Mons. de Montmorency, a great friend of the Vidame, to Brantôme, by whom it is recorded in *Vies des Hommes Illustres*, *Discours* lxxxix, art. 14. . . . After all it may be doubted whether *la chaire nostree*, for so the French called the venison thus summarily prepared, was anything more than a mere rude kind of deer-ham" (Scott's note).

772. Cf. ll. 131-2 above.

787. **Coilantogle's ford**. On the Teith just below its exit from Lech Vennachar.

CANTO V.

"It should be remembered that the action of the Poem extends over six days, and that the transactions of each day occupy a Canto. Thus each Canto opens with a sunrise, and comparing them gives one a keen sense of Scott's freedom and power as a descriptive poet. It is a very pretty harmony at the opening of this Canto to unite the sunrise with the brighter and nobler elements of his story, the martial faith and courtesy, the higher humanity, of the two combatants, and thus fix the reader's eyes on this as the centre of his picture. It is a revelation of the poet's innermost heart, and of the depth and geniality of feeling that is one of the secrets of his power over the hearts of others. As a pure matter of art, too, it is worth while to compare this prologue with the short quatrains which Spenser prefixed to the cantos of his *Faerie Queen*. These quaint half-doggerel quatrains, probably made rude on purpose to set off the elaborate music of his main stanzas, Spenser intended as sign-posts to keep the reader from losing his way. But they were an afterthought, and are too bald and detached. Scott's prologue here answers a similar purpose perfectly: it points a moral impressively yet with true poetic art, and adds to rather than disturbs the unity of the narrative" (Minto).

15. **by.** "The word is used for the rhyme, but perhaps gives the idea of hurry—*muttered off* the prayers" (Rolfe).

16. **to steal** is used here to indicate haste.

22. **wildering.** See I, 274, and note.

winded. See I, 500, and note.

23. "If the poem were to be judged by strict probability, this prospect would have to be held not true to Nature. The windings of the Forth cannot be seen from the heights to the North of Loch Achray. But from the time that Fitz-James plunges into the Trosachs, crossing the stream 'that joins Loch Katrine to Achray' (IV, 487) till he emerges on Loch Vennachar, he is in pure Romance land. The mixture of strict local truth with romance is puzzling unless the poet's right to keep to nature only when it suits him is fully recognized" (Minto).

32. **bursting through.** 'When they burst through.' This is an example of Scott's loose writing, 'bursting' cannot be construed in the sentence.

46. **shingles.** Pebbles, gravel; cf. *Enoch Arden*, 733: "all round it ran a walk of shingle."

64. **sooth to tell.** To tell the truth ; see l. 476.

102. **show.** This use of *show* is not unusual in earlier English ; cf. *Coriolanus*, IV, v, 68 : “ though thy tackle’s torn, thou show’st a noble vessel.”

108. See note on l. 124 below.

124. “There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Fends of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed. ‘There arose,’ says Pitscottie, ‘great trouble and deadly fends in many parts of Scotland, both in the north and west parts. The Master of Forbes, in the north, slew the Laird of Meldrum, under tryst :’ (i.e., at an *agreed and secure meeting*). Likewise, the Laird of Drummelzier slew the Lord Fleming at the hawking ; and likewise there was slaughter among many other great lords.—P. 121. Nor was the matter much mended under the government of the Earl of Angus : for though he caused the King to ride through all Scotland, ‘under the pretence and colour of justice, to punish thief and traitor, none were found greater than were in their own company. And none at that time durst strive with a Douglas, nor yet a Douglas’s man ; for if they would, they got the worst. Therefore, none durst plainzie of no extortion, theft, reiff, nor slaughter done to them by the Douglasses, or their men ; in that cause they were not heard, so long as the Douglas had the court in guiding’—*Ibid.* p. 133” (Scott). “This disorder was largely due to the weakness of Albany, a nephew of James III, who had been brought up in France, and was called in after Flodden to act as Regent, being next heir to the throne if James IV. had died childless. Scott elsewhere gives the following character of him :—‘The Regent Albany, bred in the court of Francis I, and a personal favourite of that monarch, was more of a courtier than of a soldier or a statesman ; and the winning qualities of vivacity and grace of manners which had gained him favour and applause while in France, were lost upon the rude nobility of Scotland.’ He was nominally Regent from 1515 to 1523” (Minto).

150. **shingles.** See on 46 above.

153. See note on l. 379 below.

161. **rears.** “Raises. The word was formerly less restricted in its application than at present. Cf. Shakespeare ‘rear my hand’ (*Tempest*,

II, i, 295, *Julius Cæsar*, III, i, 30), 'rear the higher our opinion' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II, i, 35), etc. ; Milton's 'he reared me,' that is, lifted me up (*Par. Lost*, VIII, 316), 'rear'd her lank head' (*Comus*, 836), etc." (Rolfe.)

shock. A group of sheaves ; cf. *Judges*, xv, 5 : "He burnt up both the shocks and also the standing corn."

165. "The ancient Highlanders verited in their practice the lines of Gray :—

'An iron race the mountain cliffs maintain
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain ;
For where unwearied sinews must be found,
With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground ;
To turn the torrent's swift descending flood ;
To tame the savage rushing from the wood ;
What wonder if, to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd ;
And while their rocky ramparts round they see
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow),
Insult the plenty of the vales below ?'

—*Fragment on the Alliance of Education and Government.*

"So far, indeed, was a *Creugh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighbouring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the *Sassenach*, Saxons, or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach. Sir James Grant of Grant is in possession of a letter of apology from Cameron of Lochiel, whose men had committed some depredation upon a farm called Moines, occupied by one of the Grants. Lochiel assures Grant that, however the mistake had happened, his instructions were precise, that the party should foray the province of Moray (a Lowland district), where as he coolly observes, 'all men take their prey'" (Scott's note).

177. **good faith.** In good faith.

198. **curlew.** The accent is on the last syllable, contrary to usage ; cf. Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* : "'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call."

234-5. Scott notes that similar language was used by the Earl of Athole in 1335 : " He looked at a great rock which lay beside him, and swore an oath that he would not fly that day until that rock should show him the example." (*Tales of a Grandfather*, chap. xiv.)

246. Alluding, doubtless, to the old myths with regard to earth-born warriors : the Titans, the warriors who sprang from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus, etc.

253. **jack** was a defensive coat of leather or some such material, but it might be strengthened, as in this case, with rings or plates of metal.

270. " This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy. The following story I can only quote from tradition, but with such an assurance from those by whom it was communicated, as permits me little doubt of its authenticity. Early in the last century, John Gunn, a noted Cateran, or Highland robber, infested Inverness-shire, and levied *black mail*, up to the walls of the provincial capital. A garrison was then maintained in the castle of that town, and their pay (country banks being unknown) was usually transmitted in specie, under the guard of a small escort. It chanced that the officer who commanded this little party was unexpectedly obliged to halt, about thirty miles from Inverness, at a miserable inn. About night-fall, a stranger, in the Highland dress, and of very prepossessing appearance, entered the same house. Separate accommodation being impossible, the Englishman offered the newly-arrived guest a part of his supper, which was accepted with reluctance. By the conversation he found his new acquaintance knew well all the passes of the country, which induced him eagerly to request his company on the ensuing morning. He neither disguised his business and charge, nor his apprehensions of that celebrated freebooter, John Gunn.—The Highlander hesitated a moment, and then frankly consented to be his guide. Forth they set in the morning ; and, in travelling through a solitary and dreary glen, the discourse again turned on John Gunn. ' Would you like to see him ? ' said the guide ; and, without waiting an answer to this alarming question, he whistled, and the English officer, with his small party, were surrounded by a body of Highlanders, whose numbers put resistance out of question, and who were all well armed. ' Stranger,' resumed the guide, ' I am that very John Gunn by whom

you feared to be intercepted, and not without cause : for I came to the inn last night with the express purpose of learning your route, that I and my followers might ease you of your charge by the road. But I am incapable of betraying the trust you reposed in me, and having convinced you that you were in my power, I can only dismiss you unplundered and uninjured.' He then gave the officer directions for his journey, and disappeared with his party as suddenly as they had presented themselves'" (Scott's note).

277. **wont** = wanted ; see note on I, 408.

298. **three mighty lakes.** Katrine, Achray, Vennachar.

302. "The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochartle. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochartle, and indeed on the plain itself, are some intrenchments, which have been thought Roman. There is adjacent to Callander, a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp" (Scott's note).

308. See I. 106 above.

315. "The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in former combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise. In that desperate combat which was fought between Quelus, a minion of Henry III. of France, and Antraguët, with two seconds on each side, from which only two persons escaped alive, Quelus complained that his antagonist had over him the advantage of a poniard which he used in parrying, while his left hand, which he was forced to employ for the same purpose was cruelly mangled. When he charged Antraguët with this odds, 'Thou hast done wrong,' answered he, 'to forget thy dagger at home. We are here to fight, and not to settle punctilios of arms.' In a similar duel, however, a younger brother of the house of Aubanye, in Angoulesme, behaved more generously on the like occasion, and at once threw away his dagger when his enemy challenged it as an undue advantage. But at this time hardly anything can be conceived more horribly brutal and savage than the mode in which private quarrels were conducted in France. Those who were most jealous of the point of honour, and acquired the title of *Ruffinés*, did not scruple to take

every advantage of strength, numbers, surprise, and arms, to accomplish their revenge" (Scott's note).

325. **atone**. Cf. 735 below: "A victim to atone the war." Shakespeare uses the verb transitively though not in exactly the same sense, as in *Richard II.*, I, i, 202: "Since we cannot atone you." (This is the original sense of the word, 'to bring *at one*.')

329-30. See III, 91, ff.

334. **read**. Interpreted, explained; frequent in early English, *e.g.*, Chaucer's *Death of Blanche*: "Joseph he that *rede* so The king's metynge (dream), Pharaow," and the old ballad, *The Brans of Yarrow*: "I'll read your dream, sister, he says"; so Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, II, iv, 36, etc.

349. **kern**. See on III, 49.

356. **carpet knight**. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 257: "He is a knight dubbed with unhatched rapier and on carpet consideration." Markham, in his *Book of Honour* (1625) explains that carpet knights are "men who are by the Prince's grace and favour made knights at home, and in the time of peace, by the imposition or laying on of the king's sword. . . . And these of the vulgar or common sort are called *carpet-knights*, because, for the most part, they receive their honour from the king's hand, in the court and upon carpets and such like ornaments belonging to the king's state and greatness."

364. **ruth**. Pity; a word now obsolete, though we have *ruthless*. Cf. *Coriolanus*, I, i, 101: "Would the nobility lay aside their ruth."

371. **which** refers to the whole clause that follows; Roderick has already expressed his preference for single combat.

373. **falchion**. Another poetical word for *sword*; properly a curved sword (Lat. *falx*, sickle).

378. **darkly** refers to the mood and expression of the combatants.

379. "A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broad-sword against the enumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front rank of the clans were thus armed; and Captain Grose informs us, that, in 1747, the privates of the 42nd regiment, then in Flanders, were,

for the most part, permitted to carry targets.—*Military Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 164. A person thus armed had a considerable advantage in private fray" (Scott's note).

383. "The use of defensive armour, and particularly of the buckler, or target, was general in Queen Elizabeth's time, although that of the single rapier seems to have been occasionally practised much earlier. Rowland Yorke, however, who betrayed the fort of Zutphen to the Spaniards, for which good service he was afterwards poisoned by them, is said to have been the first who brought the rapier fight into general use. Fuller, speaking of the swash-bucklers, or bullies, of Queen Elizabeth's time, says:—'West Smithfield was formerly called Ruffians' Hall, where such men usually met, casually or otherwise, to try *masteries* with sword and buckler. More were frightened than hurt, more hurt than killed therewith, it being accounted unmanly to strike beneath the knee. But since that desperate traitor Rowland Yorke first introduced thrusting with rapiers, sword and buckler are disused.' In 'The Two Angry Women of Abingdon,' a comedy, printed in 1599, we have a pathetic complaint:—'Sword and buckler fight begins to grow out of use. I am sorry for it: I shall never see good manhood again. If it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up; then a tall man and a good sword-and-buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or rabbit.' But the rapier had on the continent long superseded, in private duel, the use of sword and shield. The masters of the noble science of defence were chiefly Italians. They made great mystery of their art and mode of instruction, never suffered any person to be present but the scholar who was to be taught, and even examined closets, beds, and other places of possible concealment. Their lessons often gave the most treacherous advantages; for the challenger, having the right to choose his weapons, frequently selected some strange, unusual, and inconvenient kind of arms, the use of which he practised under these instructors, and thus killed at his ease his antagonist, to whom it was presented for the first time on the field of battle" (Scott's note).

389. *in closing strife.* They came to close quarters; cf. II, 371.

406. "I have not ventured to render this duel so savagely desperate as that of the celebrated Sir Ewan of Lochiel, chief of the clan Cameron, called, from his sable complexion, Ewan Dhu. He was the last man in Scotland who maintained the royal cause during the great Civil War, and his constant incursions rendered him a very unpleasant neighbour

to the republican garrison at Inverlochy, now Fort-William. The skirmish is detailed in a curious memoir of Sir Ewan's life, printed in the Appendix of Pennant's *Scottish Tour*.

“In this engagement, Lochiel himself had several wonderful escapes. In the retreat of the English, one of the strongest and bravest of the officers retired behind a bush, when he observed Lochiel pursuing, and seeing him unaccompanied with any, he leapt out, and thought him his prey. They met one another with equal fury. The combat was long and doubtful: the English gentleman had by far the advantage in strength and size; but Lochiel, exceeding him in nimbleness and agility, in the end tript the sword out of his hand: they closed and wrestled, till both fell to the ground in each other's arms. The English officer got above Lochiel, and pressed him hard, but stretching forth his neck, by attempting to disengage himself, Lochiel, who by this time had his hands at liberty, with his left hand seized him by the collar, and jumping at his extended throat, he bit it with his teeth quite through, and kept such a hold of his grasp, that he brought away his mouthful: this, he said, *was the sweetest bit he ever had in his lifetime.*”—Vol. i, p. 375” (Scott's note).

411. **reck'd not of.** See on IV, 473.

452. **Lincoln green.** See on I, 464.

461. **palfrey.** A small saddle-horse, particularly a lady's horse.

465. **weed.** See on IV, 506.

466. **bourne.** See on IV, 36.

485, ff. “It may be worth noting,” Lockhart says, “that the Poet marks the progress of the King by naming in succession places familiar and dear to his own early recollections—Blair-Drummond, the seat of the Homes of Kaimies; Kier, that of the principal family of the name of Stirling; Ochertyre, that of John Ramsay, the well-known antiquary, and correspondent of Burns; and Craigforth, that of the Callenders of Craigforth, almost under the walls of Stirling Castle:—all hospitable roofs, under which he had spent many of his younger days.”

The places named are all on the banks of the Teith between Callander and Stirling.

486. **prick'd.** Originally *spurred*, thence the word came to mean *rode*; as in *Faerie Queen*, I, i, 1: “A gentle knight was pricking on the plain.”

487. **merry-men.** See on IV, 68.

488, ff. This animated narrative expressive of the swiftness of their course, may be compared with the similar but more elaborate account of William of Deloraine's ride to Melrose (*Lay*, I, 259-345).

519. **Out**, *i.e.*, you are mistaken in your conjecture ; as frequently in Shakespeare, etc.

525. **Saint-Serle.** "The king himself is in such distress for a rhyme as to be obliged to apply to one of the obscurest saints in the calendar" (Jeffrey.) Scott wrote originally *by my word*, which rhymed with *Lord* for "Earl" in the next line.

526. Scott himself says : "The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus." For the latter see note on I, 142.

534. See note on IV, 231.

541. **ward** is used in Scott's loose fashion for 'ward off.'

544. 'Shall become a nun.'

549-52. "An eminence on the north-east of the castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood. The fate of William, eighth earl of Douglas, whom James II. stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdock Duke of Albany, Duncan Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart, were executed at Stirling in 1425. They were beheaded upon an eminence without the castle walls, but making part of the same hill, from whence they could behold their strong castle of Donne, and their extensive possessions. This 'heading hill,' as it was sometimes termed, bears commonly the less terrible name of Hurley-Hacket, from its having been the scene of a courtly amusement alluded to by Sir David Lindsay, who says of the pastimes in which the young king was engaged,

'Some harled him to the Hurly-hacket ;'

which consisted in sliding, in some sort of chair it may be supposed, from top to bottom of a smooth bank. The boys of Edinburgh, about twenty years ago, used to play at the hurly-hacket, on the Calton-Hill, using for their seat a horse's skull" (Scott's note).

558. **Franciscan steeple.** The steeple of a church belonging to the

religious order of the Franciscans or Gray Friars ; the former name they derived from St. Francis of Assisi, who founded their order in 1208, the latter name from their dress, which distinguished them from the Dominicans or Black Friars, and the Carmelites or White Friars.

562. **morrice-dancers.** “The *morrice* or *moorish* dance was probably of Spanish origin ; but after its introduction into England it became blended with the May-day games. One distinctive feature of the Morrice-dancer was the wearing of bells on the heel” (Scott). In Scott’s *Abbot*, chap. xiv, there is a description of the dance.

564. “Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Leslie has latinized it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles. At Dumfries, a silver gun was substituted, and the contention transferred to fire-arms. The ceremony, as there performed, is the subject of an excellent Scottish poem, by Mr. John Mayne, entitled the Siller Gun, 1808, which surpasses the efforts of Ferguson, and comes near to those of Burns” (Scott’s note).

571. **play my prize.** Cf. Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, I, i, 399 : “You have play’d your prize.”

272. **stark.** Strong : So Chaucer, *House of Fame* :

Me carrying in his claws *starke*
As lightly as I were a lark,

and the *Lay*, I, 215 : “A stark, moss-trooping Scott was he.” The word originally meant stiff, as in *I Henry IV.*, V, iii, 42 : “Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff.”

584. **jennet.** A small Spanish horse.

611. Scott gives a description of the dress of the Morrice-dancer in the *Fair Maid of Perth*, ch. xvi, and in a note on ch. xx, he speaks of their wearing 252 small bells in sets of twelve at regular musical intervals.

614. “The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a

favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the 6th Parliament of Queen Mary, c. 61, A.D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that 'na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise.' But in 1561, the 'rascal multitude,' says John Knox, 'was stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of many years left and damned by statute and act of Parliament; yet would they not be forbidden.' Accordingly they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592. Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England: for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him, because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime. Much curious information on this subject may be found in the Preliminary Dissertation to the late Mr. Ritson's edition of the songs respecting this memorable outlaw. The game of Robin Hood was usually acted in May; and he was associated with the morrice-dancers, on whom so much illustration has been bestowed by the commentators on Shakespeare. A very lively picture of these festivities, containing a great deal of curious information on the subject of the private life and amusements of our ancestors, was thrown, by the late ingenious Mr. Strutt, into his romance entitled '*Queen-hoo Hall*,' published after his death, in 1808" (Scott's note).

615-8. The persons mentioned are the traditional companions of Robin Hood; *Friar Tuck* was his chaplain, skilled also in handling the quarter-staff; the latter appears in *Ivanhoe* as the hermit of Copmanhurst.

617. **as ivory bone.** The quaint comparison is in imitation of the style of the old ballads in which these personages appear.

622. The bull's eye, or centre, of the target was white.

624. For a similar extraordinary feat in archery, see *Ivanhoe*, chap. xiii.

626. **stake.** That which is set up; here, *the prize*.

630. **wight**. There are two different words of this form ; one a noun meaning person, as in the *Lay*, I, i, 6 : " No living wight, save the lady alone," and *Othello*, II, i, 59 : " She was a wight, if ever such wight were, to suckle fools ;" the other an adjective, meaning *strong*, *brave*, as in *Marmion*, VI, xx, 14 : " O, for one hour of Wallace *wight*," and the *Lay*, I, xxii, 2 : " wightest steed." In the present case either interpretation may be given.

630, ff. " The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus. But the king's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglasses, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft. I would have availed myself more fully of the simple and affecting circumstances of the old history, had they not been already woven into a pathetic ballad by my friend Mr. Finlay.

" His (the king's) implacability (towards the family of Douglas) did also appear in his carriage towards Archibald of Kilspindie, whom he, when he was a child, loved singularly well for his ability of body, and was wont to call him his Gray-Steill. Archibald, being banished into England, could not well comport with the humour of that nation, which he thought to be too proud, and that they had too high a conceit of themselves, joined with a contempt and despising of all others. Wherefore, being wearied of that life, and remembering the king's favour of old towards him, he determined to try the king's mercifulness and clemency. So he comes into Scotland, and taking occasion of the king's hunting in the park at Stirling, he casts himself to be in his way as he was coming home to the castle. So soon as the king saw him afar off, ere he came near, he guessed it was he, and said to one of his courtiers, yonder is my Gray-Steill, Archibald of Kilspindie, if he be alive. The other answered that it could not be he, and that he durst not come into the king's presence. The king approaching, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon, and promised from thenceforward to abstain from meddling in public affairs, and to lead a quiet and private life. The king went by without giving him any answer, and trotted a good round pace up the hill. Kilspindie followed, and though he wore on him a secret, or shirt of mail, for his particular enemies, was as soon at the castle gate as the king. There he sat him down upon a stone without, and entreated some of the king's servants for a cup of drink, being weary and thirsty ; but they, fearing the king's displeasure, durst give him none. When the king was set at his dinner he asked what he had

done, what he had said, and whither he had gone? It was told him that he had desired a cup of drink, and had gotten none. The king reproved them very sharply for their discourtesy, and told them that if he had not taken an oath that no Douglas should ever serve him, he would have received him into his service, for he had seen him sometime a man of great ability. Then he sent him word to go to Leith, and expect his further pleasure. Then some kinsman of David Falconer, the cannonier that was slain at Tantallon, began to quarrel with Archibald about the matter, wherewith the king showed himself not well pleased when he heard of it. Then he commanded him to go to France for a certain space, till he heard further from him. And so he did, and died shortly after. This gave occasion to the King of England (Henry VIII.) to blame his nephew, alleging the old saying That a king's face should give grace. For this Archibald (whatsoever were Angus's or Sir George's fault) had not been principal actor of anything, nor no counsellor nor stirrer up, but only a follower of his friends; and that noways cruelly disposed.'—*Hume of Godscroft*, ii, 107" (Scott's note).

637-8. **Larbert** is a town ten miles south of Stirling;

Alloa is seven miles east of Stirling on the Forth.

641. "The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus, in the *Cokes Tale of Gamelyn*, ascribed to Chaucer:—

‘There happed to be there beside
Tried a wrestling :
And therefore there was y-setten
A ram and als a ring.’”

(Scott's note).

652. It broke as it fell.

660. **Ladies' Rock**. "In the Castle-hill is a hollow called 'the Valley' comprehending about an acre, and having the appearance of an artificial work, for justings and tournaments, with other feats of chivalry. Closely adjoining to this valley, on the south, is a small rocky pyramidal mount, called 'The Ladies' Hill,' where the fair ones of the court took their station to behold these feats" (*Nimmo's History of Stirlingshire* as quoted by Stuart).

662. **pieces broad**. "After the introduction of guineas in 1663, the twenty-shilling pieces of the preceding reign were called 'broad pieces,' because they were much broader and thinner than the new coins" (Stuart).

735. **atone.** See on 325 above.

754. **prick'd.** See on 486 above.

768. **Hyndford** is a village in Lanarkshire on the Clyde. A Sir John Carmichael of Hyndford was Warden of the Borders in the reign of Mary of Scotland.

790. An example of the figure called *prolepsis*; the 'mate' must expire before the term 'widow' is applicable; cf. Macaulay's *Battle of Lake Regillus*, xiv :

The rush of squadrons sweeping
Like whirlwinds o'er the plain,
The shouting of the slayers
And the screeching of the slain.

819. **this common fool.** So we have "fool multitude" in the *Merchant of Venice*, II, ix, 26.

822. **vulgar throat.** The throat of the common people; cf. the use "vulgar" in l. 868 below.

834. Lockhart quotes a parallel passage from *Coriolanus*, I, i, 180, ff. :

Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate, and your affections are
A sick man's appetite who deserves most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favors swims with fins of lead
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye ! Trust ye ?
With every minute ye do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland.

838. **cognizance.** "The sable pale of Mar." See on IV, 153.

839. **cousin.** A term of courtesy, not necessarily implying relationship, employed by kings and other persons of high rank of one another. So Henry addresses Katherine as cousin in *Henry V.*, V, ii, 4, and Hotspur speaks of "Cousin Glendower," *1 Henry IV.*, III, i, 3.

856. **lost.** Forgotten.

858. **for spoiling of.** Cf. the same construction in Shakespeare, *Sonnet*, iii :

The which he will not every hour survey,
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.

and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I, ii, 136 : "Yet here they shall not lie for catching cold."

887. **Earl William.** The Douglas who was stabbed by James II. Cf. note on 549 above.

CANTO VI.

7. **battled.** ‘Battlemented,’ as in II, 702.

9. **the kind nurse of men.** Cf. *2 Henry IV.*, III, i, 5: “O gentle sleep, nature’s soft nurse.”

34. **stored.** “Abundantly heaped. The poet might have found a happier word than *stored*, which is misused in such a connexion, but it is characteristic of him not to mar the vigour of his delineation by too nice a search for the apt word” (Minto).

43. “The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the Foot-Band. The satirical poet, Sir David Lindsay (or the person who wrote the prologue to his play of the ‘Three Estaites’), has introduced Finlay of the Foot-Band, who, after much swaggering upon the stage, is at length put to flight by the Fool, who terrifies him by means of a sheep’s skull upon a pole. I have rather chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period, than of this Scottish Thraso. These partook of the character of the Adventurous Companions of Froissart or the Condottieri of Italy.

“One of the best and liveliest traits of such manners is the last will of a leader, called Geffroy Tete Noir, who having been slightly wounded in a skirmish, his intemperance brought on a mortal disease. When he found himself dying he summoned to his bedside the adventurers whom he commanded, and thus addressed them :—

“‘Fayre sirs, quod Geffray, I knowe well ye have alwayes served and honoured me as men ought to serve their soveraygne and capitayne, and I shal be the gladder if ye wyl agre to have to your capitayne one that is discended of my blode. Behold here Aleyne Roux, my cosyn, and Peter his brother, who are men of armes and of my blode. I require you to make Aleyne youre capitayne, and to swere to hym faythe, obey-saunce, love, and loyalte, here in my presence, and also to his brother :

howe be it, I wyll that Aleyne have the soveraygne charge. Sir, quod they, we are well content, for ye haue right well chossen. There all the companions made them seruyaunt to Aleyne Roux and to Peter his brother. When all that was done, then Gelfraye spake agayne and sayde, Nowe, sirs, ye haue obeyed to my pleasure, I canne you great thanke; wherefore, sirs, I wyll ye haue parte of that ye haue holpen to conquere: I saye unto you, that in yonder chest that ye see stande yonder, therein is to the sum of xxx thousande frankes; I will giue them accordynge to my conseyence. Wyll ye all be content to fulfyll my testament; howe saye ye? Sir, quod they, we be right well content to fulfyll your commaundement. Thanne first, quod he, I wyll and giue to the Chapell of Saynt George here in the Castell, for the reparacions thereof, a thousande and fyue hundred frankes; and I gyue to my louer, who hath truly served me, two thousande and fyue hundred frankes; and also I gyue to Aleyne Roux, your newe capitayne, foure thousande frankes; also to the variettes of my chamber, I gyue fyue hundred frankes; to myne officers I gyue a thousand and fyue hundred frankes; the rest I gyue and bequeth as I shall shewe you. Ye be vpon a thyrtye companions all of one sorte; ye ought to be bretherne, and all of one alyaunce, withoute debate, ryotte, or stryfe amonge you. All this that I haue shewed you ye shall fynde in yonder cheste: I wyll that ye departe all the resydue equally and truly bitwene you thyrtye; and if ye be not thus contente, but that the deuyll wyll set debate bytwene you than beholde yonder, is a stronge axe: breke up the coffer and gette it who can. To those wordes euery man answered and said, Sir and dere maister, we are and shall be all of one accorde; Sir, we haue so moche loued and douted you, that we wyll breke no coffer, nor breke no noynt of that ye haue ordaynd and commanded.' Lord Berners' Froissart, II, 418" (Scott's note).

53. The Flemings came from Flanders, a naturally fertile land, and in those days very productive as compared with Scotland.

60. **halberd.** A weapon in which spear and battle-axe were combined.

63. **holytide.** Here simply *holiday*.

68. **grappled to their swords.** "Cf. II, 781, 'their desperate hand *griped* to the dagger.' It may be noted, as showing how Scott searched for the right expression here, that he cancelled in the MS. two tentatives, '*grasped for* the dagger,' and '*groped for* the dagger'" (Minto).

75. **burden.** In the sense in which it is employed in II, 392.

80. **a chaser of the deer**, *i.e.*, a poacher, cf. ll. 169-70 below.

87. Cf. *The Tempest*, III, ii, 126: "will troll you a catch."

88. **buxom**. A word meaning originally *yielding*, or *obedient*, but in literature used to indicate pleasing qualities of very various character; here, *lively*, as in *Henry V.*, III, vi, 27: "buxom valour."

91. **swinging**. To *swinge* is properly to beat, to lash, cf. Milton's *Hymns on the Nativity*: "Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail," but the present participle is used as a mere intensive, as in this passage; so Fielding speaks of "swingeing damages" (*Joseph Andrews*), and Dudley Warner (*Backlog Studies*) of a "swingeing cold night."

92. **black-jack**. "A large leathern jug for beer; so named from its resemblance to a *jack*-boot, a large boot with a front piece to protect the knee" (Stuart).

93. **the seven deadly sins** are pride, idleness, gluttony, lust, avarice, envy, and anger; see *Fuërie Queen I*, iv.

95. **upsees out**. "Bacchanalian interjection, borrowed from the Dutch" (Scott). The word is found in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Beggar's Dish*: "The bowl must be upsey English"; and in Jonson's *Alchemist*:

I do not like the fullness of your eye;

It hath a heavy cast, 'tis upsee Dutch.

Upsee is said to be a corruption of the Dutch *opzyn*, in the fashion of; Scott, therefore, uses the word incorrectly here.

103. **placket and pot**. Metonymy for 'women and wine'; placket means a petticoat.

104. **lurch**. To lie in wait for, to plunder; another form of *lurk*; cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, II, ii, 26: "I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of God on the left hand . . . am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch," and *Marmion* II, Introduction, 26: "The wolf I've seen . . . with lurching step around me prowl."

106. **bully-boys**. Good fellows. The *New English Dictionary* says that *bully* was originally a term of endearment applied to either sex; cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, i, 8: "What say'st thou, bully Bottom," Scott, *Rob Roy*, chap. viii: "You are not the first bully-boy that has said stand to a true man."

124. **store of blood**. Cf. Milton's *L'Allegro*, 121: "store of ladies."

129. A description of a "glee-maiden" may be found in the *Fair Maid of Perth*, chap. xi. See also note on next line.

131. "The jongleurs, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt on the Sports and Pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of Saint Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod. In Scotland these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters. . . . The facetious qualities of the ape soon rendered him an acceptable addition to the strolling band of the jongleur. Ben Jonson, in his splenetic introduction to the comedy of 'Bartholomew Fair,' is at pains to inform the audience 'that he has ne'er a sword-and-buckler man in his Fair, nor a juggler, with a well-educated ape, to come over the chaine for the King of England, and back again for the Prince, and sit still on his haunches for the Pope and the King of Spaine'" (Scott's note).

144. Cf. Scott's *Doom of Devorgoil*:

Now give me a kiss, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Now give me a kiss, said he,
For there never came maid into merry Sherwood
But she paid the forester's fee.

152. **the tartan screen.** The tartan plaid in which her head was muffled.

170. **Needwood.** A royal forest in Staffordshire.

178. The choice of phrase is probably due to exigencies of rhyme; but cf. "do the part of a honest man" (*Much Ado*, II, i, 172).

183. **Tullibardine's house.** The family of the Murrays of Tullibardine in Perthshire, some twenty miles from Stirling.

194. **lightly.** Easily; cf. Tennyson, *Locksley Hall*: "In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

199. An errant *damosel of yore* was a damsel in search of a knight to redress some wrong; here there may be a reference to the *Errant Damzell* of the *Faerie Queen*, III, i, 15:

All suddenly out of the thicket brush
Upon a milk-white palfrey all alone,
A goodly lady did forehy them rush.

200. **high quest.** Important enterprise ; *quest* was the technical term for an adventure undertaken by a knight.

234. **barret-cap.** A small flat cap.

234-6. Cf. IV, 680-6, and the note on IV, 686.

259-62. Cf. *Marmion*. Introd. VI, 89-91.

We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when, perchance, its far-fetched claim
To Southron ear sounds empty name.

264. **Beaunesert.** For the pronunciation of the last syllable, cf. the proper name *Clerk* (pronounced and often written *Clark*) ; the proper name *Desart* is found.

295. **Leech.** Physician ; a common word in older English : Chaucer, *Troilus*, i, 857 ; Shakespeare, *Timon*, V, iv, 84.

306. **prore.** Prow ; poetic word ; cf. Mat. Arnold's *Human Life* : "Cut by the onward labouring vessel's prore."

347. **Dermid's race.** The Campbells, who were hereditary enemies of the Macgregors of Clan Alpine ; see *Legend of Montrose*, chap. xix.

348. "There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their deathbed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr. Riddel, of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the 'Dandling of the Bairns,' for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous free-booter that he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's Rant, while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burus. A similar story is recounted of a Welsh bard, who composed and played on his deathbed the air called *Dafydddy Gareggy Wen*. But the most curious example is given by Brantôme, of a maid of honour at the Court of France, entitled Mademoiselle de Limeuil" (Scott's note).

battle of Beal' an Duine. "A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

"In this roughly-wooded island * the country people secreted their

* That at the eastern extremity of Loch Katrine, so often mentioned in the text.

wives and children, and their most valuable effects, from the rapacity of Cromwell's soldiers, during their inroad into this country, in the time of the republic. These invaders, not venturing to ascend by the ladders along the side of the lake, took a more circuitous road, through the heart of the Trosachs, the most frequented path at that time, which penetrates the wilderness about half way between Binean and the lake by a tract called Yeachilleach, or the Old Wife's Bog.

"In one of the defiles of this by-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to that pass. In revenge of this insult the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, to violate the women, and put the children to death. With this brutal intention one of the party, more expert than the rest, swam toward the island to fetch the boat to his comrades, which had carried the women to their asylum, and lay moored in one of the creeks. His companions stood on the shore of the mainland, in full view of all that was to pass, waiting anxiously for his return with the boat. But just as the swimmer had got to the nearest point of the island, and was laying hold of a black rock to get on shore, a heroine, who stood on the very point where he meant to land, hastily snatching a dagger from below her apron, with one stroke severed his head from the body. His party seeing this disaster, and relinquishing all future hope of revenge or conquest, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation. This amazon's great-grandson lives at Bridge of Turk, who, besides others, attests the anecdote.' *Sketch of the Scenery near Callander*, Stirling, 1806, p. 20. I have only to add to this account that the heroine's name was Helen Stewart" (Scott's note).

377. **erne.** Eagle.

392-3. Cf. IV, 152.

396. **boune.** See note on IV, 36.

404. **barded.** Covered with defensive armour; a word applied properly only to horses; cf. the *Lay*, I, 312:

Scarce half the charger's neck was seen
For he was barded from counter to tail
And the rider was armed complete in mail.

405. **battalia.** An army in battle array; cf. Scott's *Lord of the Isles*, VI, xx, 20:

And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frowned.

Shakespeare uses the word in *Richard III.*, V, iii, 11.

414. **vaward.** Vanward or vanguard; the form is used by Shakespeare, *c.g.*, *Henry V.*, IV, iii, 130. *Mid. Night's Dream*, IV, i., 110, etc.

429. **As.** Cf. II, 56.

443. **twilight wood.** Cf. 403 above. "The meaning of the epithet can hardly be, as has been suggested, that 'the appearance of the spears and pikes was such that in the twilight they might have been mistaken at a distance for a wood.' It means only that the spears were so close and numerous as to darken the air for the men who held them up" (Minto).

452. **Tinchel.** "A circle of sportsmen, who by surrounding a great space and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *tinchel*" (Scott's note).

See the description in *Waverley*, chap. xxiv.

478. **lightsome.** "*Lightsome* seems here to indicate the spirit in which the action is performed: *i.e.*, lightsomely, easily, freely, in a light-hearted manner" (Stuart). This seems a very doubtful explanation. Perhaps "*lightsome*" is used as in the *Lay*, II, 3:

For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.

The light is let in among the masses of men, as the deer let the light in among the broom-bushes; cf. 403, and 443 above.

487. **Bracklinn.** See note on II, 270.

488. **linn.** This word, which means properly a pool, is used in I, 71, for ravine, here for the cataract which flows through the ravine.

514. For this sense of *part*, cf. II, 94, and note thereon.

516. **passing.** Cf. the phrase *passing-bell*, the bell that is rung at the hour of death, and *Lear*, V, iii, 313: "O, let him pass."

538. **wont.** See note on I, 408.

539. **bonnet-pieces.** These were gold coins issued by James V., on which the king's head was represented covered by a bonnet, instead of a crown.

store. See I, 548, and note.

542. **Lightly.** Cf. 194 above.

565. Cf. III, 428, ff.

576. **elemental rage.** The storm; cf. *Tempest*, I, i, 124: "if you can command these elements to silence," and *Lear*, III, i, 4: "contending with the fretful element."

610. **Breadalbane.** See note on I, 416.

611. **requiem.** The Mass for the Dead began with the words *Requiem æternam dona eis Domine*; hence the use of the word *requiem* in this sense.

638. **storied pane.** Windows with scenes depicted upon them in stained glass; cf. *Marmion*, V. Introd. 184:

As the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane.

and Milton's *Il Penseroso*: "storied windows richly dight."

642. **collation.** Properly 'a light meal,' also used loosely for any sort of meal. The Lat., *collatio*, means 'a bringing together,' 'a conference.' "The sense of a light repast comes from convents, in which the monks made a daily *collation*, or reading and discussion on Holy Writ. This conference was followed by a light meal, which accordingly took the name of *collatio*."

665. **of perch and hood**, i.e., of idleness; for "hood," see note on II, 523-5.

677. The omission of *to* of the infinitive after *went* was common in Elizabethan English, e.g., *Othello*, II, iii, 190.

707. **at morning prime.** Early in the morning; properly *prime* is the first canonical hour of prayer, 6 a.m.

726. **the presence**, i.e., the presence-chamber, cf. *Henry VIII.*, III, i, 17: "the two great cardinals wait in the presence."

737. **sheen.** Cf. I, 208 and note.

740. "This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of*

the Commons. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs entitled, 'The Gaberlunzie Man,' and 'We'll Gae Nae Mair a Roving,' are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language" (Scott's note).

Scott, in his note, gives at length some traditional adventures of James in disguise. One of these stories as told in *Tales of a Grandfather*, chap. xxvii, parallels the situation in the text: "Upon another occasion, King James, being alone and in disguise, fell into a quarrel with some gypsies, or other vagrants, and was assaulted by four or five of them. This chanced to be very near the bridge of Cramond; so the King got on the bridge, which, as it was high and narrow, enabled him to defend himself with his sword against the number of persons by whom he was attacked. There was a poor man threshing corn in a barn near by, who came out on hearing the noise of the scuffle, and seeing one man defending himself against numbers, gallantly took the King's part with his flail, to such good purpose that the gypsies were obliged to fly. The husbandman then took the King into the barn, brought him a towel and water to wash the blood from his face and hands, and finally walked with him a little way towards Edinburgh, in case he should be again attacked. On the way, the King asked his companion what and who he was. The labourer answered, that his name was John Howieson, and that he was a bondsman on the farm of Braehead, near Cramond, which belonged to the King of Scotland. James then asked the poor man if there was any wish in the world which he would particularly desire should be gratified; and honest John confessed he should think himself the happiest man in Scotland were he but proprietor of the farm on which he wrought as a labourer. He then asked the King, in turn, who *he* was; and James replied, as usual, that he was the Goodman of Ballengiech, a poor man who had a small appointment about the palace; but he added, that if John Howieson would come to see him on the next Sunday, he would endeavour to repay his manful assistance, and, at least, give him the pleasure of seeing the royal apartments.

"John put on his best clothes, as you may suppose, and appearing at a postern gate of the palace, inquired for the Goodman of Ballengiech. The King had given orders that he should be admitted; and John found

his friend, the goodman, in the same disguise which he had formerly worn. The King, still preserving the character of an inferior officer of the household, conducted John Howieson from one apartment of the palace to another, and was amused with his wonder and his remarks. At length James asked his visitor if he should like to see the King; to which John replied, nothing would delight him so much, if he could do so without giving offence. The Goodman of Ballengiech, of course, undertook that the King would not be angry, 'But,' said John, 'how am I to know his Grace from the nobles who will be all about him?'—'Easily,' replied his companion; 'all the others will be uncovered—the King alone will wear his hat or bonnet.'

"So speaking, King James introduced the countryman into a great hall, which was filled by the nobility and officers of the crown. John was a little frightened, and drew close to his attendant; but was still unable to distinguish the King. 'I told you that you should know him by his wearing his hat,' said the conductor. 'Then,' said John, after he had again looked round the room, 'it must be either you or me, for all but us two are bare-headed.'

"The King laughed at John's fancy; and that the good yeoman might have occasion for mirth also, he made him a present of the farm of Braehead, which he had wished so much to possess, on condition that John Howieson, or his successors, should be ready to present a ewer and basin for the King to wash his hands, when his Majesty should come to Holyrood Palace, or should pass the bridge of Cramond. Accordingly, in the year 1822, when George IV. came to Scotland, the descendant of John Howieson of Braehead, who still possesses the estate which was given to his ancestor, appeared at a solemn festival, and offered his Majesty water from a silver ewer, that he might perform the service by which he held his lands."

741. **wreath of snow.** In Scotland *wreath* is often applied, even in common parlance, to heaps of drifted snow.

783. **read.** Cf. V, 334, and note.

789. "William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdown. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his complaint of the Papingo:—

'Adieu, fair Snawdoun, with thy towers high,
Thy chaple-royal, park, and table round;
May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee,
Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
Whilk doth againe thy royal rock rebound.'

“Mr. Chalmers, in his late excellent edition of Sir David Lindsay's works, has refuted the chimerical derivation of Snowdoun from *Snedding*, or cutting. It is probably derived from the romantic legend which connected Stirling with King Arthur, to which the mention of the Round Table gives countenance. The ring within which jousts were formerly practised, in the castle park, is still called the Round Table. Snowdoun is the official title of one of the Scottish Heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

“It appears (see note on l. 740) that the real name by which James was actually distinguished in his private excursions, was the *Goodman of Ballenquich*; derived from a steep pass leading up to the Castle of Stirling, so called. But the epithet would not have suited poetry, and would besides at once, and prematurely, have announced the plot to many of my countrymen, among whom the traditional stories above mentioned are still current” (Scott's note).

848. **vespers.** Properly the evening service in churches, as *matins* is the early morning service.

WORDSWORTH.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was of Yorkshire lineage ; he himself tells us that the Wordsworths "had been settled at Peniston in Yorkshire, near the sources of the Don, probably before the Norman Conquest." For many generations at least his paternal ancestors had dwelt there as yeomen, or small landed proprietors. On his mother's side he was descended from an old Westmoreland family. His northern origin showed itself very clearly both in his physical and mental frame. On these were strongly stamped many of the well-defined peculiarities associated with that sturdy and sterling race, doubtless largely Norse in origin, which inhabits the northern counties of England and the Lowlands of Scotland. As the life of his ancestors, so was his own individual life closely bound up with the northern shires to which he belonged, and more especially with that part of them known as the Lake District. This covers an area of some 30 by 25 miles, and includes within its limits sixteen lakes, tarns and streams innumerable, sea coast, river estuaries, and mountains rising to the height of 3000 feet. Here graceful beauty and wild, rugged grandeur are closely intermingled. "Indeed, nowhere else in the world, perhaps, is so much varied beauty to be found in so narrow a space." In Wordsworth's time it was scarcely less exceptional in the character of its inhabitants. "Drawn in great part from the strong Scandinavian stock, they dwell in a land solemn and beautiful as Norway itself, but without Norway's rigour and penury, and with lakes and happy rivers instead of Norway's inarming melancholy sea. They are a mountain folk ; but their mountains are no precipices of insuperable snow, such as keep the dwellers of some Swiss hamlet shut in ignorance and stagnating into idiocy. These barriers divide only to concentrate, and environ only to endear ; their guardianship is but enough to give an added unity to each group of kindred homes. And thus it is that the Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded perhaps as near a realization as human fates have yet allowed of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's greatness. They have given an example of substantial comfort strenuously won ; of home affections intensified by independent strength ; of isolation without ignorance, and of a shrewd simplicity ; of an hereditary virtue which needs no support from fanaticism, and to which honour is more than law." (*Myers' Wordsworth.*)

On the northern borders of this district, at Cockermouth, Cumberland, William Wordsworth was born April 7th, 1770. His grandfather had been the first of the race to leave Yorkshire and buy for himself a

small estate in Westmoreland. The poet's father was an attorney and law-agent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale. In 1778 the poet's mother died, and William, along with an elder brother, was sent to the ancient Grammar School of Hawkeshead, a secluded and primitive village in the midst of the Lake District. The conditions at this simple and old-fashioned school were very different from those surrounding boys either at any of the great public schools or at private boarding-schools. Freedom and simplicity particularly characterized Wordsworth's school days. There was neither pressure of work within the class-room nor that of tradition and public opinion outside of it, such as belong to the English public schools; on the other hand, the close supervision and confinement which usually belong to a private school, were absent. The boys lodged with the cottagers of the village, and grew inured to the simplicity of their lives. After school hours each boy must have been, in the main, free to follow his own devices. No conditions could have been more suitable to Wordsworth's temperament, or more favourable to the development of his strong individuality. Finally, and most important of all, Hawkeshead lay in the midst of a beautiful and varied country, with whose different aspects their favourite amusements must have made the boys very familiar. Their sports were not of the elaborate, competitive character of later times, but took the form of rambles on the mountains, boating and skating on the lakes, nutting and fishing. In these Wordsworth, a vigorous and healthy boy, greatly delighted. There was probably nothing about him, at this period, which would mark him out, either to himself or to others, as different from, or superior to, his school-fellows. One peculiarity he did, however, possess to a very extraordinary degree—sensitiveness to the aspects of nature. Not that he went mooning about, after a precocious fashion, in search of the picturesque. The ordinary round of daily life kept him in contact with nature in some of her most beautiful and impressive forms, and produced upon his, in this regard, receptive mind effects of a most potent and permanent kind. It kept him in close contact, too, with the common people, with the "statesmen," the shepherds, and peasants of the district; and from these two sources, nature and the life of the people, he drew the material of his later works.

In October, 1787, Wordsworth entered the University of Cambridge through the kindness of his uncles, for his father had been dead some years. His collegiate life contributed but little to his development. His character was at once strong and narrow, only pliant to congenial

influences. He himself said that his peculiar faculty was *genius*—by which he meant creation and production from within—not *talent*, the capacity of assimilation and appropriation from without. Wordsworth's fruitful knowledge came to him direct from observation and meditation. He seems, accordingly, to have gained little from the regular studies and teaching of Cambridge; nor did he find any special stimulus, as many have done, in the social opportunities which it affords. In college society his powers had no opportunity to show themselves; nor did he form any very intimate or influential friendships. Not that he was, during this period, a recluse; he took his share in ordinary college life; but at college, as at school, he would probably not have impressed an onlooker as being in any respect superior to the average student. By degrees, however, he himself became aware of his special powers, and felt the call to the poetic vocation. In 1784 he wrote his first poem, *An Evening Walk*, which was not published until 1793. Among the most important events of his external life may be numbered his pedestrian tours. Wandering, he tells us, was with him an inborn passion; and it was one in which he indulged throughout his life. In 1790, he with a fellow collegian made a three months' tour of France, Switzerland, Northern Italy and the Rhine. These were stirring days on the Continent; the year before, the Bastille had fallen, and Wordsworth shared, as did most intelligent young Englishmen of his time, in the joy which welcomed the new birth of liberty. As yet, however, natural scenery exercised over him a more powerful influence than human affairs. The impressions of this journey are recorded in *Descriptive Sketches*, a poem which was not written, however, until two years later.

In the beginning of 1791, he took the B.A. degree. His friends wished him to enter the church, but he was reluctant, although he had no definite views of his own. He lingered in London for three months, noting men and things in the keen, meditative fashion natural to him; he made a tour in Wales; he thought of writing for the newspapers. At length he determined to spend a year in France, in order to master the language, with the idea that he might turn it to account in the capacity of a travelling tutor. This stay in France had a very important influence on the poet's development. To escape English society, he went to Orleans. His chief companions there were some French officers who were, most of them, partisans with the old regime. One, however, General Beaupuis, was a lofty and enlightened sympathizer with the Revolution; and through him Wordsworth soon came to take a profound interest in the great struggle going on about him. He was in Paris

shortly after the September Massacres, and felt so deeply the importance of the crisis that he was on the point of throwing himself personally into the contest on the side of the moderate republicans ; but he was under the necessity, probably through lack of money, of returning to England. Change of place did not cool his sympathies. The bloodshed and outrage which accompanied the Revolution and which alienated many of its admirers, Wordsworth with clearer insight perceived to be not the outcome of the new spirit of freedom, but of the oppressions of ages. But when, in the spirit of the era which was supposed to be forever past, the new republic proceeded to embark on a career of conquest : abroad crushed the liberty of Switzerland, and at home began to develop into a military despotism, Wordsworth lost his hope of the future and faith in humanity. A period of deep depression followed, from which he at length, though slowly, recovered. In fact, he passed through a crisis such as befalls many thoughtful men, such as is recorded in the biographies of Carlyle, and of John Stuart Mill ; and such as in familiar life often takes the religious form popularly styled "conversion." Faith in one's own future or the future of the world is shattered, and new truths have to be apprehended, or old truths more vitally realized, in order that the man may once again set out on his life's course with some chart and with some aim. The peculiarity of Wordsworth's case is that his crisis took place in connection with the greatest event of modern history, not with a merely individual experience ; and, secondly, in the peculiar source where he found healing—not in books or the teachings of others, not in what would be ordinarily called a religious source, but in a revelation and healing that came to him direct from visible nature, and from contemplating the simple lives of the "statesmen" and shepherds of his native mountains. The poet's hopes ceased to centre around any great movement like the French Revolution, and he perceived that, not in great political movements, but in the domestic life of the simple, unsophisticated man, is the true anchor for our faith in humanity and our confidence in the future of the race.

Meanwhile, his life had been unsettled, and his prospects uncertain. Unexpectedly, early in 1795, a solution of his difficulties as to the choice of a profession came in the shape of a legacy from a young friend, Raisley Calvert, who had insight enough to perceive the genius of Wordsworth, and left him £900 to enable him to follow out the promptings of this genius. With the strictest economy and utmost plainness of living, Wordsworth judged that this would suffice to maintain him ; and he determined to devote himself unreservedly to what he felt was his

true vocation—poetry. He combined his scanty means with those of his sister Dorothy; they reckoned from all sources upon a joint income of £70 or £80 a year. Dorothy Wordsworth merits, even in the briefest sketch of her brother's life, at least a passing notice. She shared all his tastes and much of his genius. She was one of the “dumb poets.” She had all her brother's insight into nature, all the feelings which belonged to his poetic endowment; but the instrument of verse she never mastered, or, perhaps, did not seek to master; for she devoted her whole life unselfishly to him. His sister Dorothy and the poet Coleridge were, he tells us, the only persons who exerted a profound influence on his spiritual and poetical development.

It was in 1796 that Wordsworth became acquainted with Coleridge; the two men had many interests and opinions in common, and a close friendship sprang up between them. In order to be near Coleridge the Wordsworths rented a house at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire, in July, 1797. The two men exercised an influence upon each other highly favourable to their intellectual and poetic activity. They planned a volume of poems to which each should contribute. The result was the *Lyrical Ballads*, one of the most notable publications in the history of later English poetry. Coleridge furnished four poems,—*The Ancient Mariner*, and three smaller pieces. The bulk of Wordsworth's contributions was much greater; and this volume was the first of his writings to manifest the peculiarities of his genius and the greatness of his power. It included the *Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey*, *The Thorn*, *Expostulation and Reply*, *The Tables Turned*, *Lines Written in Early Spring*, etc. It was in 1798 that the *Lyrical Ballads* were issued; in autumn of the same year Wordsworth, his sister, and Coleridge sailed to Germany. The visit had no special influence upon Wordsworth, whose time was mainly employed in writing poems thoroughly English in character. In the following spring they returned home. In December, 1799, the brother and sister settled down in Dove Cottage, Grasmere, and Wordsworth entered upon a course of life which varied but little during the many years that remained to him. Poetic composition and the contemplation of nature formed the staple of his regular occupations. Of the character of his daily life, the best idea is to be obtained from his sister's diaries, from which large excerpts are given in Knight's *Life* of the poet. The following extract may serve as a sample; it is dated Saturday, May 1st, 1802:

“A clear sky. . . . I sowed the flowers, William helped me. We went and sate in the orchard. . . . It was very hot. William wrote

The Celandine. We planned a shed, for the sun was too much for us. After dinner we went again to our old resting-place in the hollies under the rock. We first lay under the holly, where we saw nothing but the trees, and a budding elm mossed, with the sky above our heads. But that holly-tree had a beauty about it more than its own. . . . When the sun had got low enough we went to the rock shade. Oh, the overwhelming beauty of the vale below, greener than green. Two ravens flew high, high in the sky, and the sun shone upon their bellies and their wings, long after there was none of his light to be seen but a little space on the top of Loughrigg Fell. Heard the cuckoo to-day, this first of May. We went down to tea at eight o'clock . . . and returned after tea. The landscape was fading: sheep and lambs quiet among the rocks. We walked towards King's, and backwards and forwards. The sky was perfectly cloudless. . . . Three solitary stars in the middle of the blue vault, one or two on the points of the high hills."

In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson, whom he had known since childhood; but this event scarcely interrupted the even tenor of his way. He had a few intimate friends, such as Coleridge and Sir George Beaumont, and in time his writings drew younger men to visit him, DeQuincey, Wilson ("Christopher North"), and even to take up their residence in his neighbourhood. But, on the whole, his life during his prime was the life of a recluse. Nor, with his humbler neighbours, though interested in their welfare, was he on terms of genial intercourse such as marked the relations of Scott to those about him. He was, in short, self-centred, wrapped up in his own thoughts—a reserved man, with a cold and absent-minded exterior. "He wasn't a man as said a deal to common folk," said one of these common folk to an enquirer, "but he talked a deal to hissen." "He was not a man that folks could crack wi'," said another, "nor not a man as could crack wi' folks." In old age, when he became famous, he saw something of literary society in London, and the impression which he made on a very keen, but in this case not very favourable, observer, may be quoted:—"During the last seven or ten years of his life, Wordsworth felt himself to be a recognized lion in certain considerable London circles, and was in the habit of coming up to town with his wife for a month or two every season to enjoy his quiet triumph and collect his bits of tribute *tales quales*. . . . Wordsworth took his bit of lionism very quietly, with a smile sardonic rather than triumphant, and certainly got no harm by it, if he got or expected little good. For the rest, he talked well in his way; with veracity, easy brevity, and force, as a wise tradesman would of his tools and workshop, and as no unwise one could. His voice was good, frank and sonorous, though practically clear, distinct, and forcible rather than melodious; the tone of him business-like, sedately con-

fidant ; no discourtesy, yet no anxiety about being courteous. A fine, wholesome rusticity, fresh as his mountain breezes, sat well on the stalwart veteran, and on all he said and did. You would have said he was usually a taciturn man ; glad to unlock himself to audience sympathetic and intelligent, when such offered itself. His face bore marks of much, not always peaceful, meditation ; the look of it not bland or benevolent so much as close, impregnable and hard, a man *multa tacere loquere paratus*, in a world where he had experienced no lack of contradictions as he strode along. The eyes were not very brilliant, but they had a quiet clearness ; there was enough of brow, and well-shaped ; rather too much of cheek ("horse-face," I have heard satirists say) ; face of squarish shape, and decidedly longish, as I think the head itself was (its "length" going horizontal) ; he was large-boned, lean, but still firm-knit, tall, and strong-looking when he stood, a right good old steel-grey figure, with rustic simplicity and dignity about him, and a vivacious strength looking through him which might have suited one of those old steel-grey markgrafs whom Henry the Fowler set up to ward the 'marches' and do battle with the intrusive heathen in a stalwart and judicious manner." (Carlyle's *Reminiscences*.)

Wordsworth was a philosopher in the antique sense of the word, shaping his life according to his own ideals, and little regarding the fact that these ideals were very different from those of men in general. He found his happiness in easily attainable sources—in nature, in his own work and thoughts, in literature and domestic life. He cared nothing for wealth or the luxuries which it affords. "Plain living and high thinking" characterized his life ; his daily fare and home surroundings were but little superior to those of the peasantry about him. The only luxury in which he indulged was travelling ; he made tours in Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent, of which his works contain memorials, and these, with frequent visits to friends in England, were among the chief events of his quiet life. The simplicity of the tastes of the household and Mrs. Wordsworth's careful management enabled the poet to subsist with comfort upon an income which would have meant harassing poverty to most men of his class. His works brought him no money ; but the payment in 1802 of a debt due his father's estate added something to his resources, and when these proved inadequate through the increasing expenses of his family, he fortunately obtained (1813) through the influence of the Earl of Lonsdale the office of Distributor of Stamps for Westmoreland. This afforded him a sufficient income and did not make claims upon time and energy inconsistent with his devotion to poetic

work. In the same year, 1813, he removed from Grasmere, where he had resided for some fourteen years (nine of them in Dove Cottage) to Rydal Mount, at no great distance; this was his home during the remaining thirty-seven years of his life.

We have noted the appearance of the first great product of Wordsworth's poetical genius, the *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798. This volume fell almost dead from the press. Wordsworth struck out in new poetic fields, and marked originality in poetry, clashing as it does with preconceived ideas, is rarely welcomed. In 1800 he published a new and enlarged edition of the *Ballads* and prefixed a prose statement of his own poetic theory so fundamentally different from accepted notions as to excite the intense hostility of all the regular critics. The consequence was that each new work of his was received with a chorus of disapprobation or contempt. The general public were thus prejudiced; and the poems themselves possessed no striking and attractive qualities such as might have counteracted, among ordinary readers, the influence of accepted judges. The neglect of his work was keenly felt by the poet, who, however, continued steadily on in his own fashion, or even exaggerated the peculiarities which were offensive to the prevalent taste. Meanwhile these works were read and greatly admired by a discerning few, and began quietly to gain a hold upon a wider public, until in the poet's old age this unnoted development suddenly manifested itself in a widespread recognition of his genius. "Between the years 1830 and 1840 Wordsworth passed from the apostle of a clique into the most illustrious man of letters in England. The rapidity of this change was not due to any remarkable accident, nor to the appearance of any new work of genius. It was merely an extreme instance of what must always occur when an author, running counter to the fashion of his age, has to create his own public in defiance of the established critical prowess. The disciples whom he draws round him are for the most part young; the established authorities are for the most part old; so that by the time the original poet is about sixty years old most of his admirers will be about forty, and most of his critics will be dead. His admirers now become his accredited critics; his works are widely introduced to the public, and if they are really good his reputation is secure. In Wordsworth's case the detractors had been unusually persistent, and the reaction, when it came, was therefore unusually violent." (Myers' *Wordsworth*.)

The change in feeling was manifested in many ways. In 1839 Wordsworth received the honorary degree of D.C.L. from Oxford, and

on the occasion of its bestowal was welcomed with great enthusiasm. In 1842 a pension was offered to him ; in 1843 he was made Poet Laureate. Thus full of years and honours, and in that same tranquillity which marked his life, Wordsworth passed away April 23rd, 1850.

"Every great poet," said Wordsworth, "is a teacher ; I wish to be considered as a teacher or as nothing." Wordsworth has, therefore, a didactic aim in his poetry. Happily, however, his conception of teaching was no narrow one ; he did not think that poetry in order to be didactic, must directly present some abstract truth, or be capable of furnishing some moral application ; if a poem kindled the imagination, or stirred the nobler feelings, it contributed in his opinion even more to the education of the reader. His sense of the unity and harmony of things was strong. As in *Tintern Abbey*, we find him giving expression to his sense of the unity of all existence—the setting suns, the round ocean, and the mind of man being all manifestations of one and the same divine spirit—so he believed in the unity and close interconnection of all the faculties of man. No one faculty could be stimulated or neglected without a corresponding effect upon the rest. The delight, for example, afforded by the contemplation of scenery quickened, he thought, the moral nature ; while the man whose imagination or sense of beauty had remained undeveloped must suffer also from limitations and weakness in his ethical constitution. Therefore his work is not generally didactic in the ordinary sense, though not infrequently so ; his poetry may merely stimulate imagination and feeling, and thence educative effects will steal unnoted into heart and brain.

He was a teacher, then ; but his teaching did not mainly aim at imparting any particular system of abstract truth, though this also it may sometimes attempt. It rather sought to elevate and ennoble the whole character by exhibiting, and making the reader feel, the sources of high and genuine pleasure. It teaches by revealing, by stimulating, by elevating. Wordsworth thought that the fountain of the purest and highest joys lie about us, within the reach of all. The child finds them everywhere :

Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway.

But as we grow older the world imposes on us with its lower allurements—wealth, luxury, ambition—which dull our perceptions and degrade our will until we become blind and indifferent to the fountains of the highest happiness and the truest culture. To these, it is Wordsworth's aim in his poetry to lead us back.

The sources of this happiness and this higher culture the poet had in his own personal experiences, when his heart was sick and his beliefs shattered, found in nature, in the homely round of ordinary duties, in the domestic affections, in the contemplation of the life of men in its simplest and most natural form among the peasantry of his native mountains. These things, accordingly, are what he depicts to us in his poems ; they afford his poetic material ; and with all these things his life fitted him to deal. They are not, however, presented simply and for their own sakes, as the more purely artistic method of Shakespeare or Scott would present them. Wordsworth was of strongly meditative and reflective bent ; what he saw and felt, he naturally made the basis of thought. He was not carried away by his joys and sorrows, as Burns and Shelley. His temperament was cool and self-contained, not emotional and impetuous. Nor was he markedly sympathetic, forgetting himself in the life of others. So his poetry neither gives expression simply to feeling, nor does it afford purely objective pictures of men and women ; it uses these things as material or stimulus to thought. Wordsworth does not forthwith set down what he has felt or seen ; he broods over it and shapes it to moral rather than artistic ends. He is not passionate or animated ; his poems appeal, not to the active and impetuous man, but to the contemplative and thoughtful—to age rather than to youth. In this respect, as in others, he is unlike Scott. The latter centres our attention upon the pictures of men and things which he unrolls before us, and rarely intrudes himself or his reflections. But Wordsworth is always in his own poems ; sometimes illegitimately speaking through the mouths of his characters, more often turning aside to reflect or comment.

With the earnestness of Wordsworth's temperament and the seriousness of his aim, playfulness of fancy and delight in mere ornament were scarcely compatible. Unlike Keats, he had not the purely artistic and sensuous nature which could solace itself with such things. Substance with him was all-important, and this substance must be truth. His poetry was based on the facts of life, and showed

How verse may build a throne
On humble truth.

One merit he especially claimed for himself, that he kept " his eye on the subject." Nothing in the poets who preceded him irritated him more than their inaccuracies,—for example, in the delineation of natural scenes, their conscious sacrifice of truth for the sake of what they considered

poetic effect, as exemplified, for instance, in their pastoral poetry. The same spirit which demanded truth in matter called for simplicity and directness in style. He aimed at keeping the reader's eye also on the subject, and did not blur the clearness of the outline of his theme for the sake of the charm of ornament and of technical display. Hence, his style, at its best, is marvellously direct, chaste, and effective; and, at its worst, tends to prosaic baldness and triviality. So simple, so free from every needless excrescence, so perfectly adapted to the thought, is Wordsworth's expression in his happier moments, that Matthew Arnold has affirmed that he has no style, *i.e.*, the words are so perfectly appropriate that they seem to come from the object, not from the writer. "Nature herself seems," says Matthew Arnold, "to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power. This arises from two causes: from the profound sincerity with which Wordsworth feels his subject, and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of the subject itself. He can and will treat such a subject with nothing but the most plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness."

The greatness of Wordsworth and the significance of his poetry can only be adequately conceived when his position in the development of English literature has been examined. The typical and accredited poetical style of the preceding age is represented by Pope. That poetry sought to instruct, or to please the intellect, rather than to stimulate the imagination or to touch the emotions. It put greater stress upon style and form than upon matter; and, in style, it aimed at elegance, polish, and epigrammatic force. It took much thought for dignity and propriety; and its ideas of dignity and propriety were narrow. Thus it limited the range of its themes, and feared especially the "low" and commonplace. This tendency affected not only its matter but its language. It avoided, as far as possible, the language of real life, and to escape ordinary words had recourse to vapid periphrases. One result of the narrowness of the range of vocabulary and imagery was that both became utterly hackneyed.

Against all these peculiarities the genius of Wordsworth naturally revolted. He found his model, in as far as he had one, in Burns, a poet outside recognized literary circles—a man of the people. But the fact that existing taste was formed upon such poetry as has just been characterized, and that standards based upon it were being constantly applied to his own poetry, intensified his dislike of the elder fashion, and led him to intensify the novel peculiarities of his own poems.

He was a conscious rebel against authority, and naturally gave the less weight to considerations which might be urged in favour of the old and against the new. Hence, in his theory, and not seldom also in practice he carried these peculiarities to extremes.

In conclusion, two or three great services of Wordsworth as a poet may be enumerated. He opened the eyes of his own generation and still continues, in a lesser degree, to open the eyes of readers of the present day to the beauties of nature, and to the fund of consolation and joy that may there be found. He showed that we do not need to go to distant lands and remote ages for poetic material, that poetry lies about us, in our own age, in ordinary life, in commonplace men and women. And he overthrew the stilted conventional style of the poetry which was in the ascendant, and showed that the highest poetry might be simple, direct, and plain.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—Life by Christopher Wordsworth; a fuller one by Prof. Knight; excellent shorter sketch with criticisms by Myers (*Eng. Men of Letters*); Wordsworth's autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*, is of the highest value for biographical purposes; much use is made of it by L  gouis in his excellent *Early Life of Wordsworth*. Works—full critical ed. by Knight, 8 vols.; ed. by Dowden, 7 vols.; in one vol., with introd. by Morley (*Macmillan's Globe Library*). Critical essays are very numerous; Wordsworth's prose preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* should be read in connection with Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, chaps. v., xiv., xvii.-xxii.; among best essays by other writers are those by M. Arnold (Introd. to *Select. from Wordsworth*), Lowell (*Among My Books*), R. H. Hutton (*Essays on Literary Criticism*), Leslie Stephen (*Hours in a Library*, iii), Caird (*Essays on Literature and Philosophy*), Principal Shairp, Masson, etc.; *Wordsworthiana* is a vol. containing papers by members of the *Wordsworth Soc.*; the one vol. ed. of works mentioned above has a bibliography. The best volume of Selections is that by Dowden, with introduction and notes (Ginn & Co.).

TO MY SISTER.*

This poem was composed in the spring of 1798, in front of Alfoxden House (see p. 316 above), near Nether Stowey; it was included in the *Lyrical Ballads* published during the same year. The poet notes: "My little boy-messenger on this occasion [the Edward of l. 13] was the son of Basil Montague. The larch mentioned in the first stanza was standing when I revisited the place in May, 1841, more than forty years after." The sister addressed is, of course, Dorothy Wordsworth (see p. 316 above).

The poem exemplifies Wordsworth's sense of the community between man and nature; the air, the trees, the fields seem to feel as man feels. It also exhibits his sense of the power of nature in moulding and elevating character, and proclaims the value of a passive enjoyment of her spirit and beauty. Such enjoyment may seem idleness, but it is idleness more productive than is the restless analysis of mere intellect (which the world at large calls *useful* employment) inasmuch as it induces a proper temper and frame of mind,—more needful, in the poet's opinion, for right thinking than are logic and reasoning power.

18. Our calendar shall not be a conventional one, but shall be determined by the actual course of nature; this is exemplified in the next two lines.

26. In the edition after 1837 this line is amended into

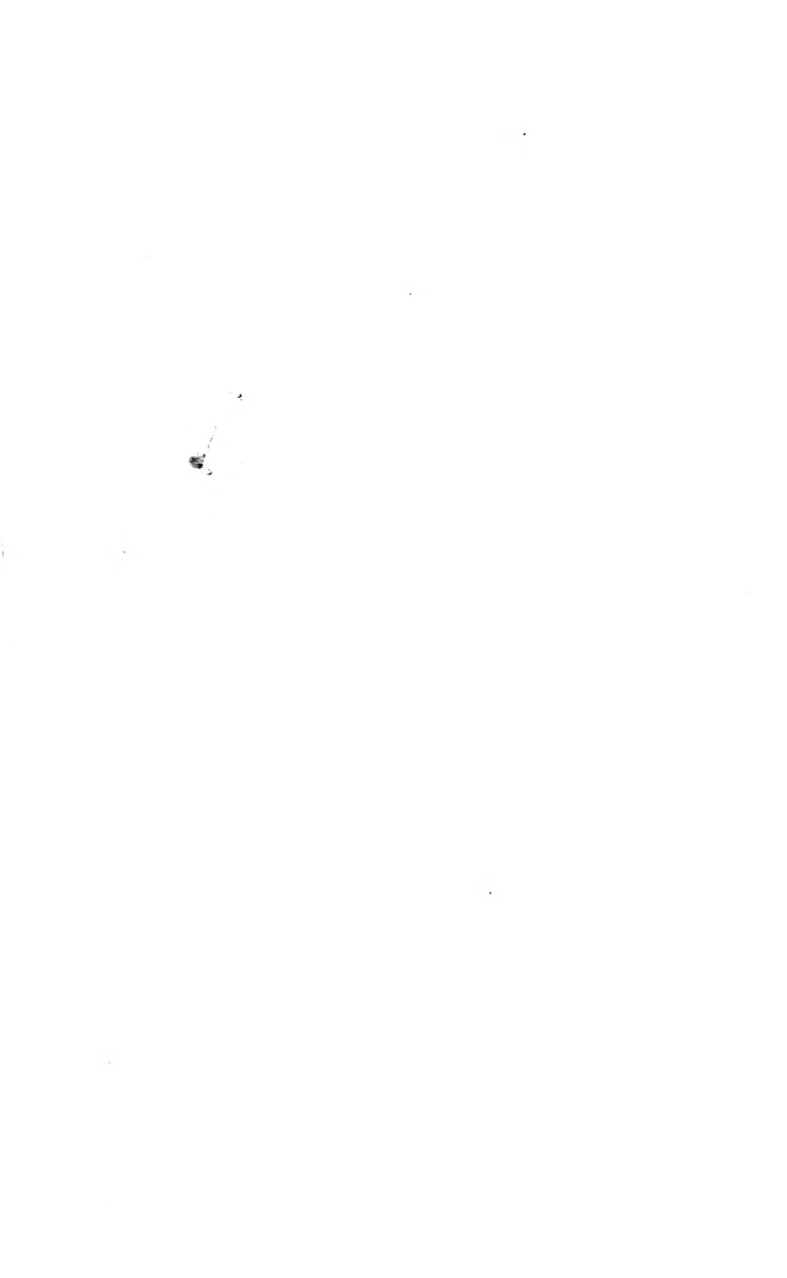
"Than years of toiling reason."

33. Cf. the passage in *Tintern Abbey* quoted in the note on *Nutting*, below.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

The dates of composition and publication are the same as in the preceding poem. "The lines entitled *Expostulation and Reply*, and those which follow, arose out of a conversation with a friend who was

*The text of Wordsworth printed in this volume is that of Matthew Arnold's *Selections*, but the interesting and important variants (and in the course of his long life, the poet frequently altered his text) are given in the notes. Professor Dowden says (Preface to *Poems by Wordsworth*): "Matthew Arnold's choice of poems was excellent; his choice of texts was not judicious; probably his own early associations of pleasure was with that inferior text. In some instances he did what was illegitimate,—he silently manufactured a text of his own, such as Wordsworth had never sanctioned or seen, by piecing together readings from more editions than one." An examination of the various readings given in the present volume, will probably convince the reader that the poet's later changes were nearly always, though not invariably, improvements.



Mr Thomas Hutchinson, in his
edition of the Lyrical Ballads, ar-
gues that the friend is William Haz-
litt who visited Coleridge at Stowey
in the Summer of 1798, ^(see p - above) was, at that date
a great student of the modern moral
philosophers, & was engaged in writing
a philosophical work on The Principles
of Human Action. Hazlitt in his

Mr Hutchinson thinks the very
occasion of the poem is referred
to in the following extract from
Hazlitt's My First Acquaintance
with Poets; during a walk from Al-
forden to Stowey "I got into a metaphysical
argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge
was explaining the different notes of the night-
ingale to his sister, in which we neither of
us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly
clear and intelligible."

somewhat unreasonably attached to modern books of moral philosophy." (Wordsworth.)

The 'expostulation' is put in the mouth of "Matthew," a personage who appears in other poems also, and seems to be modelled upon the poet's old schoolmaster at Haweshead, William Taylor; it is addressed to "William," who is the poet himself;—at least the 'reply' embodies his peculiar ideas.

This poem is a sort of defence of the "idleness" which is recommended in the previous piece.

13. **Esthwaite Lake.** A lakelet, about two miles long, west of Windermere, and in the immediate neighbourhood is Hawkeshead, where Wordsworth went to school; see map.

THE TABLES TURNED.

Composed and published, as the previous poems, in 1798.

These lines are addressed by 'William' of the preceding poem, to 'Matthew,' and continue the same argument. The point emphasized here is the superiority of the temper and general character begotten by intercourse with nature, to that produced by a purely intellectual attitude of mind which is always busied with pulling things to pieces in order to find the way they are put together, or with seeking reason for their existence; but which does not look at things as they are, or have any time for *feeling* about things. The thought which Wordsworth here and elsewhere utters, is partly the outcome of a widespread reaction against the hard, dry intellectualism of the 18th century; an example of a parallel movement in another sphere is the uprisal of Methodism against the purely ethical and logical trend of theology in the earlier part of the century.

9. "Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (*Ecclesiastes*, xii, 12).

14. Before 1810: "And he is no mean preacher".

19-20. Truth, the poet believes, is not to be attained by mere logic; it is the result not of merely mental processes, but of the whole nature of man; so Tennyson, in *In Memoriam*, cxiii, puts knowledge, which is the product of the *mind*, beneath wisdom, the outcome of the *soul*; cf. *John*, vii, 17: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

1-4. Before 1820:
 Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks
 Why all this toil and trouble?
 Up! up! my friend, and put your books
 ... now double.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS.

Written in 1799 ; first published in Coleridge's periodical, *The Friend*, for December 28th, 1809, where it follows Coleridge's prose description of skating on the lake at Ratzeburg. The title in *The Friend* was *Growth of Genius from the influences of Natural Objects on the Imagination, in Boyhood and Early Youth*. This poem forms a part of Wordsworth's long autobiographical poem, *The Prelude* (Bk. I, ll. 401, ff.). It is a reminiscence of the poet's school-days ; the lake is Esthwaite, the village, Hawkshead.

Wordsworth and Nature. Nature, *i.e.*, man's dwelling-place—the world of mountains, fields, lakes, sky, trees, etc.—was a more important factor in Wordsworth's life than in that, perhaps, of any other poet. He spent a great part of his time in the contemplation of it, and it shaped his philosophy in a quite peculiar way.* In his own experience, this communing with nature had comforted and soothed him even in his time of greatest need, and seemed to stimulate and instruct the higher man within him. Such experience is not, in every respect, unique. Many persons in that day, and still more in ours, have found intense and elevating pleasure in beautiful scenery. But Wordsworth had these feelings to an extraordinary degree, and the circumstances both of his boyhood and of his later life were such as to develop them to the utmost. He possessed, therefore, very unusual qualifications for speaking upon such matters ; and, being master also of the gift of poetic expression, became one of the greatest of nature-poets. He utters for others, with marvellous truth and felicity, what they themselves have vaguely noted or felt in regard to nature ; his keener observation and appreciation enable him to open the eyes of his readers to much of beauty that would have escaped their attention. But, further, Wordsworth's enjoyment of the world about him was not confined merely to pleasure in variety and beauty of form and colour. These things which address themselves to the bodily eye seemed to him the outward manifestations of an indwelling spirit,—a spirit akin to his own, and in harmony with it. The *divine*, in short, lay behind these outward shows ; in them God was manifesting himself, and through them man might come into closest relations with God. Hence, for Wordsworth, there gathered about nature a deep sense of mystery and of reverence ; in his breast it excited feelings of a profound and religious character—far

* See the extract from Dorothy Wordsworth's Diary, p. ~~418~~ above.

beyond mere delight in sensuous beauty. It is the emphasis that he lays upon this aspect of nature, and upon the feelings derived from it, that gives the most distinctive quality to his nature poetry.*

The poem in which we find the most adequate account of Wordsworth's characteristic view of nature, is the *Lines written above Tintern Abbey*, where he also explains that this full appreciation of her significance was a gradual growth. In the poem before us, and in the poem on *Nutting*, which follows, we have an exemplification of one of the earlier stages, when Nature takes him in hand,† as it were, and begins her course of instruction. Through no lofty motive, but in the pursuit of boyish pleasures he is brought into close contact with some of the most beautiful aspects of the material world; these are the background of his daily life and are intertwined with his keenest enjoyments and most vivid experiences; and, at favourable moments, as in those recorded in these two poems, there steals upon his boyish heart some vague consciousness of her beauty, and of her power.

1-4. The poet addresses the Spirit of which we have spoken above. This Spirit or Mind gives form and energy to mere material things; cf. the passage from *Tintern Abbey* cited in the note on *Nutting*.

6-10. So in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, in which he explains his theory of poetry, one of the reasons that he gives for preferring "humble and rustic life" as a subject for poetry is, "in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."

9. Not, for example, with the mean and perishable surroundings of the poorer classes in an ugly, manufacturing town, but with magnificent mountains and valleys of the Lake country.

10-11. Association with these nobler things elevates the beginnings and sources of our feeling and thought; cf. *Personal Talk*, continued, ll. 2-4.

12-14. Through the elevation and insight thus attained (viz., by association with what is noble in life and nature) we learn to find, even in pain and fear, sources of consolation and strength, and a proof of the

* We may contrast him with Scott and Tennyson, who delight in natural scenery and phenomena, but only for their beauty and charm, without the sense of mysterious sympathy, of the deep import which lies beneath what presents itself to the bodily eye.

† Cf. the poem "Three years she grew."

greatness of human nature even in the intensity of our emotions. This is a characteristic thought with Wordsworth; it lies at the basis of the *Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle*; cf. also the close of the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*:

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears.

20. **trembling lake** refers to the quivering of the water, noticeable through the motion of the reflections, even in very calm weather.

23. Wordsworth, in the edition of 1845, changed this line into "Mine was it in the fields."

27. In *The Prelude* (1850) this line reads: "The cottage windows blazed through the twilight gloom."

37. ^{clinging} ~~loud bellowing~~. ^{lental} ~~Changed in 1840 to "loud chiming."~~ ^{the reading was "loud bellowing"}
^{whole of these is description of the hounds in *Midnight's Dream*, IV, i, and especially "march'd}
40. ~~Meanwhile~~. ^{Changed in 1836 to "smitten."} ^{the mouth like bells"}

41-2. Coleridge, in *The Friend*, says: "When very many are skating together the sounds and the noises give an impulse to the icy trees, and the woods all round the lake *tinkle*."

Cf. also Tennyson's description of a wintry night in *Morte d'Arthur*:

The bare, black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of iron heels.

50-2. The reading in the text dates from 1827. At first the lines stood:

To cut across the image of a star
That gleam'd upon the ice; and often times

in 1820:

To cross the bright reflection of a star
That gleamed upon the ice; and often times

in *The Prelude*:

To cut across the reflex of a star,
That fled, and flying still, etc.

^{dearest Maiden. The boat is no doubt addressing his sister to row him}

58-60. Refers to a common experience: when continued and swift motion is stopped, we feel for a time as if the motion were continued in

things about us ; cf. the sensation of dizziness. In l. 60 the emphasis is on "visible."

63. In *The Prelude* : "Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep."

NUTTING.

Written in Germany in 1799, published in 1800 ; intended to form part of *The Prelude*, "but struck out," says Wordsworth, "as not being wanted there. Like most of my schoolfellows, I was an impassioned Nutter. For this pleasure, the Vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still [1843] stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys."

"The poem—a fragment of autobiography—illustrates the processes and incidents by which Wordsworth's animal joy in nature in boyhood was gradually purified and spiritualized." (Dowden.)

♫ The ~~first~~ five selections ^{all} ~~all~~ have to do with the one theme—the influence of nature as an educator of man. In *Nutting* the poet dwells with fond delight upon a remembrance of boyish years, when, by mere animal activity and childish pleasures, he was drawn into contact with nature in her beauty and repose ; yet, even then, he was half-conscious of her charm, and already vaguely felt a *spirit* in nature, and a sympathy with that spirit—things of which he made so much in his later philosophy, life, and poetry.

♥ The poem is in the main descriptive, and we feel that, to some extent, the poet elaborates and lingers upon the details for their own sake, and because they are associated with a glow of youthful life and the faery charm that haunts the fresh experiences of children. (Cf. *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* and *To the Cuckoo*.) But it is characteristic of Wordsworth that the poem is (1) not a mere description of nature as it presents itself to the bodily eye, but of nature as influencing man ; and (2) that the picture serves to lead up to an interpretation of nature—to the statement of something which is the outcome, not of mere observation by the bodily organs, but of the imaginative and philosophic faculty :—

A sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man ;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

—(Lines composed above Tintern Abbey.)

4. This line was added in 1827.

5. Up to 1827, the line read : "When forth I sallied from our cottage door." The *cottage* was that of Anne Tyson ("the frugal dame" of l. 11), where Wordsworth lodged (see p. 313, above).

6. "And with a wallet" was the reading before 1815.

9-12. Before 1815

of Beggar's weeds
Put on for the occasion, by advice
And exhortation of my frugal Dame.

Before

14-16. ~~In~~ 1836 these lines were amended to read :

*Among the woods
And o'er the pathless rocks, I forced my
Over pathless rocks,
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets
Forcing my way, I came.*

Tempting

20. ~~milk-white~~ clusters.

Before

"milk-white clusters"

Changed in 1845 to "tempting clusters,"
~~perhaps because "milk-white" seemed an exaggeration.~~

33. water-breaks. Ripples or wavelets ; cf. Tennyson's *Brook* :

With many a silvery water-break
Above the golden gravel.

under

36. ~~beneath~~

changed to "under" in 1845.

Before

"beneath."

Before

read

*"Even then, when from the tower I towered
Ere from the mutilated tower I towered."*

50. ~~In~~ 1836 this line became "Even then, when from the tower I towered." Dowden suggests that the alteration was made "to avoid the thrice-repeated 'en' sound in the opening words."

53. In 1836 "saw" was inserted before "the intruding sky."

intruding sky. The epithet is applied because the sky was only made visible through the breaking of the branches, and its light seemed at variance with the previous seclusion of the spot.

MICHAEL.

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, 1800. In Dorothy Wordsworth's journal, under date Oct. 11 of that year, occurs the entry: "We walked up Green-head Ghyll in search of a sheepfold. . . . The sheepfold is falling away. It is built nearly in the form of a heart unequally divided." In the diary there follow numerous references to Wordsworth's working upon the poem, usually at the sheepfold. On Dec. 9, there is the entry: "W. finished his poem to-day," the reference being probably to *Michael*. *Michael* was included in the edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* dated 1800, but actually published in Jan. 1801.

In Professor Knight's edition, and in Dowden's *Aldine* edition, will be found a number of fragments, intended for *Michael*, recovered from a MS. book of Dorothy Wordsworth's. "The greater portion of these fragments are occupied with an episode judiciously omitted, which tells of the search made in late autumn by Michael and his son for a stray sheep" (Dowden).

"The character and circumstances of Luke," said Wordsworth, "were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere." On another occasion he said: "*Michael* was founded on the son of an old couple having become dissolute, and run away from his parents; and on an old shepherd having been seven years in building up a sheepfold in a solitary valley." On April 9, 1801, Wordsworth wrote to his friend Thomas Poole: "In writing [*Michael*], I had your character often before my eyes, and sometimes thought that I was delineating such a man as you yourself would have been, under the same circumstances;" again, "I have attempted to give a picture of a man of strong mind and lively sensibility, agitated by two of the most powerful affections of the human heart,—parental affection and the love of property, *landed* property, including the feelings of inheritance, home, and personal and family independence." To Charles James Fox he wrote: "In the two poems, *The Brothers* and *Michael*, I have attempted to draw a picture of the domestic affections, as I know they exist among a class of men who are now almost confined to the north of England. They are small independent *proprietors* of land, here called 'statesmen,' men of respectable education, who daily labour on their own little properties. The domestic affections will always be strong amongst men who live in a country not crowded with

population ; if these men are placed above poverty. But, if they are proprietors of small estates which have descended to them from their ancestors, the power which these affections will acquire amongst such men, is inconceivable by those who have only had an opportunity of observing hired labourers, farmers, and the manufacturing poor. Their little tract of land serves as a kind of permanent rallying point for their domestic feelings, as a tablet on which they are written, which makes them objects of memory in a thousand instances, when they would otherwise be forgotten. . . . The two poems that I have mentioned were written with a view to show that men who do not wear fine clothes can feel deeply. . . . The poems are faithful copies from nature ; and I hope whatever effect they may have upon you, you will at least be able to perceive that they may excite profitable sympathies in many kind and good hearts ; and may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature, by showing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us." Of this class of landed-proprietors, the last survivors of the *yeomanry* of England, Mr. Myers says "they have afforded as near a realization as human fates would allow of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's welfare." It was the contemplation of their virtues which was one of the chief sources of healing for Wordsworth's dejection and loss of faith in human nature (see p. 315 above).

Wordsworth and Man.—We have had several examples of Wordsworth's attitude towards nature, and of the poetic use that he makes of the material derived thence. But Wordsworth's poetry also treats of man and human life, and in this sphere, as in the other, his work presents marked peculiarities. In contrast with the majority of poets, and especially in contrast with the school of poets who had been dominant in England during the greater part of the century, Wordsworth takes his themes from humble, rustic, commonplace life. He thus, at once, abandons the advantages which a dignified or romantic theme, or one which treats of remote times and places, yields. Those very sources of charm which lie upon the surface in the case of *the Lady of the Lake*—varied and romantic incidents, picturesque manners and costume, plot interest, the stimulus of mystery and curiosity—are usually, as in *Michael*, excluded by the poet's very selection of subject. Nor does he

The Ancient Mariner or of

attempt to introduce these attractions in any adventitious way, to invest his poems by his style and treatment with some of these qualities which do not naturally accompany his theme.* What then are the sources of his poetic power? What is it that makes such a poem as *Michael* a work of extraordinary beauty and charm?

There are two main points which should be noted in the poem before us as particularly distinctive of Wordsworth's genius and art. (1) He chooses his theme for the nobility, intensity, and beauty of the emotion involved, not because of the strikingness of the external facts that form the environment of this emotion. In this respect he is unlike Scott; he cares nothing for picturesque personages and events, provided he finds a subject which presents some noble, affecting, important truth of human nature.† So in *Michael* the fatherly love which is the centre of the whole is a beautiful and noble trait of human nature in whatever surroundings exhibited; and its tragic disappointment is naturally fitted to awaken intense sympathy in the reader. Evidently these are two great merits—even perhaps the greatest—that a poetic theme could have; so great, at least, that the poet is able to dispense with many of the more superficial attractions which *The Lady of the Lake* affords. Wordsworth, accordingly, neglecting all adventitious and external ornaments, gives his whole energy to bringing this fatherly love home to our own hearts and sympathies. If the student will examine the poem from this point of view, he will see that it has a unity which *The Lady of the Lake* cannot boast; every portion contributes something to make us feel and understand how tender and deep was Michael's love, or else to comprehend that other feeling—Michael's profound attachment to his home and property—which is also essential as leading to the boy's departure from home, and to the tragic conclusion of the story.

(2) The second point to be specially noted is that the poet does not present the series of events simply for their own sake, as Scott and as Shakespeare do; but that, further, although in a very unobtrusive fashion, he teaches a lesson. (See p. 321 above.) He himself, in his

* As Tennyson ^{occasionally} ~~continually~~ does, e.g., in *Enoch Arden*, which affords a very interesting parallel and contrast to *Michael*.

† "Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these poems from the popular poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling." (Wordsworth, Preface to the Second Edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*.)

a romantic poem such as

meditative fashion, has found illumination and solace in this simple tale ; he weaves his feeling and his thought through the whole texture of the work, and brings it home, if unobtrusively, yet none the less effectively, to the reader. The truth that Wordsworth drew from this picture of humble life, the feeling which it aroused in him, was that of the innate dignity and worth of human nature ; and through the poem he intensifies our sense of reverence for the race, our hopes for the future of mankind. It is noteworthy that though the story is a sad one, the effect of the poem is not depressing—quite the contrary. We are touched and subdued, not harrowed, as by the wretched sensational realism of so much of our present-day literature ; we hear

The still, sad music of humanity
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue.

Nor is this a chance peculiarity of *Michael* ; it is a pervading note in Wordsworth's philosophy and poetry. The great event of Wordsworth's life was the crisis produced by the French Revolution. (See p. 316 above.) In emerging from this he discovered sources of happiness and consolation open to all, which raised him from the depth of dejection and pessimism to a permanent level of cheerfulness, and sometimes to heights of ecstatic joy. To reveal these sources of happiness to mankind was his chosen task. And so, whether he treats of nature or of man, Wordsworth is eminently the consoler. "Wordsworth's poetry is great," says Matthew Arnold, "because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties ; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it. The source of joy from which he thus draws is the truest and most unfailing source of joy accessible to man. It is also accessible universally. Wordsworth brings us, therefore, according to his own strong and characteristic line, word

Of joy in widest commonalty spread.

Here is an immense advantage for a poet. Wordsworth tell us of what all seek, and tells us of it at its truest and best source, and yet a source where all may go and draw for it."

From this point of view at which we now are, it will be noted that the selection of humble personages and humble life is a positive advantage, because fine feeling and fine character in a situation where the

casual advantages of the few—wealth, high culture, etc.—are absent, seem to be inherent in human nature itself, and do not seem to be the outcome of surroundings. Note also that here, in some measure, as in the *Lady of the Lake*, we have a picture of manners, customs, and life as developed by special circumstances in a particular locality. But in the case of Scott, the introduction of this element has its ground in the picturesqueness of the life depicted, in its remoteness and romantic character; in the case of Wordsworth, in the fact that the simple, wholesome manner of life is a pleasing spectacle in itself and begets cheering views as to the actual and possible development of the finer elements of human nature under quite attainable conditions. If the picture is poetical, it is poetical because the homely details are ennobled (as they would equally be in real life) by elevation of character and feeling in the persons concerned. The only accessory in the poem possessing external beauty, is the scenery of mountain, glen, and storm which forms the background of the human interest. But this, too, is of the essence of the story, because, in the first place, it forms the actual surroundings of the North-country shepherd whose life the poet is realistically depicting; and in the second place, because, according to Wordsworth's belief, some of the essential traits of Michael's character are in part due to the influence of this impressive scene. Michael has been educated, as Wordsworth describes himself as being educated, by mountains, and storm, and sky.* So that the landscape is also an essential of the situation. Again we have a contrast with Scott; he describes the scenery of the Trossachs, merely on account of its beauty, as part of the picture for the sensuous imagination. Such set descriptions as are to be found in Scott's poem, are wholly absent from *Michael*; nature is only introduced as influencing man, and as explaining the action.

Since the main effects, then, of the poem depend upon the intensity of the sympathy aroused in the reader with the central emotion, and upon his belief in the possible existence of such persons, feelings and situations, it is evidently incumbent upon the poet that he should be realistic and should avoid the fanciful, idyllic beauties which we noted in the *Lady of the Lake*. Accordingly, Wordsworth keeps close to actual facts; he shuns no bare or homely detail of simple shepherd life; he adds no borrowed charm from poetic fancy. There is none of the improbable prettiness of Tennyson's *May Queen*.

In unison with the simplicity of the theme and the realistic sincerity

* See opening of *Influences of Natural Objects*.

of the treatment, the style is simple and direct, sometimes even to the verge of baldness. There is no needless ornament, no seeking for archaic or distinctively poetical language, yet there is no banality or childish simplicity. Wordsworth's expression, here as elsewhere, is marked by directness, sincerity and aptness, accompanied by dignity, beauty and harmony to a degree unsurpassed in the English language. "Nature herself," as Matthew Arnold says, "seems to take the pen out of his hand and write for him, with her bare, sheer penetrating power."

2. Ghyll. "In the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley with a stream running through it" (Wordsworth).

> 6. around. Before 1827 "beside".

18-19. In 1836 changed to

Before

And to that ~~simple object~~ ^{place a story} appertains

~~History — unenriched with strange events.~~
Is not unfit, I deem, etc.

Which, though it be ungarish with events.

24-33. In *Tintern Abbey* Wordsworth refers to the same fact, that nature interested him before men; see ll. 72-93.

49-52. Note the fine cadence of this passage.

51. subterraneous music. "I am not sure that I understand this aright. Does it mean the sound of the wind under overhanging cliffs and in hollows of the hills?" (Dowden).

61-77. Here, as in *Nutting*, beautiful nature, accidentally, as it were, associated with daily employments, obtains a hold upon the imagination and moulds his character. With this passage may be compared the following lines from the rejected fragments of *Michael* referred to in the introductory note:—

No doubt if you in terms direct had asked
Whether he loved the mountains, true it is
That with blunt repetition of your words
He might have stared at you, and said that they
Were frightful to behold, but had you then
Discoursed with him
Of his own business, and the goings on
Of earth and sky, then truly had you seen
That in his thoughts there were obscurities,
Wonder and admiration, things that wrought
Not less than a religion in his heart.

6-67.

67-8. In 1836 changed to:

^{Before} the hills which he so oft

~~hills, which with vigorous step~~

~~He had so often climbed;~~

Had climbed with vigorous steps.

73-74. Before 1832, the passage read :

So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honourable gains ; these fields, these hills
Which were his living Being, even more
Than his own blood.

As Prof. Dowden points out, " The narration which follows shows that the fields and hills were *not* more a part of Michael's being than was his own son."

78-9. Before 1815 as follows :

He had not passed his days in singleness,
He had a Wife, a comely Matron, old—

89-90. The poet seems to regard " With one foot in the grave " as a local expression.

Before
99. they ~~amended to "the" in 1836, "then"~~

Before
112. ~~Amended in 1836 into " With huge and black projection over-~~
~~brown'd."~~ *Did with a huge projection overbrown'd*

115. utensil. The stress is on the first syllable—a pronunciation now almost obsolete.

33. *with large object.* *St. Michael's Lost, IV, 142-4: Yet higher than the*
134. Easedale. To the north of Grasmere. *The verdurous wall of Paradise up*
which to our general view gave perspective

Dunmail-Raise. The pass from Grasmere to Keswick.

139. " The name of the Evening Star," the poet told Miss Fenwick, " was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north."

144-5. Before 1827 as follows :

Effect which might perhaps have been produc'd
By that instinctive tenderness.

Before
145. ~~In 1836 changed to :~~
~~Blind~~ *which is*
~~Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all.~~

~~One of the few cases in which the later reading seems decidedly not an improvement.~~

This line was inserted first in 1836
7 146. ~~After 1836 the following line was inserted between 146 and 147 :~~
~~" That earth can offer to declining man " ; again a very doubtful improvement.~~

2 151. ff. It will be noted how many circumstances the poet inserts in order to make the fatherly affection especially intense in the case of

Michael: he has but one child, the son of his old age, is constantly in his company, etc.

8/ 157. ^{Before} In 1836 changed to:

His cradle, ~~as~~ with a woman's gentle hand.

3-6 164-5. ^{Before} In 1836 changed to:

~~Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
Sate with a fatter'd sheep before him stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade~~
Wrought with his own hands

9/ 168. Clipping Tree. "Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing" (Wordsworth's note).

-4 199-201. Admirable expression of a common experience: through sympathy with the feelings of others—the fresher, imaginative feelings of childhood, for example—familiar objects and experiences win a new impressiveness and power.

-3 200-2. Compare the elevation, beauty, and suggestiveness of diction and rhythm here with their simplicity in such lines as 174-6; in each case the style is in admirable keeping with thought.

7/ 204. This reading was introduced in 1815. In the first issue of 1800 the reading was

While this good household were thus living on
in the second issue

While in this fashion which I have described
This simple Household thus were living on

1-3 220-4. ^{Before} In 1836 changed to

gathered so much
That he could As soon as he had ~~armed~~ himself with strength
to look his trouble in the face, ~~it seemed~~
~~The shepherd's sole resource to sell at once~~
It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell

6-7 245-6. Even his affection for his son intensifies his attachment to the land.

153. ^{Before} 1836 : "may come again to us." *Where he stay*

8 257. "The story alluded to here is well known in the country. The chapel is called Ings Chapel, and is on the right hand side of the road leading from Kendal to Ambleside" (Wordsworth's note).

3 287. "There is a slight inconsistency here. The conversation is represented as taking place in the evening (see l. 226)" (Knight).

289. In 1836 corrected to "Last two nights."

29¹. Often distinction is given to a passage by a reminiscence, half unconscious it may be, of Scriptural language; here, for example, is a suggestion of the touching speech of Judah to Joseph (see *Genesis*, xlv, especially vv. 22 and 31).

303. "With daylight" in 1820 replaced "Next morning" of the earlier editions.

32¹. a sheepfold. "It may be proper to inform some readers that a sheepfold in these mountains is an unroofed building of stone walls, with different divisions. It is generally placed by the side of a brook, for the convenience of washing the sheep; but it is also useful as a shelter for them, and as a place to drive them into, to enable the shepherds conveniently to single out one or more for any particular purpose." (Wordsworth's note.)

326. by the streamlet's edge before 1815 read "close to the brook side."

33¹. ~~speaks Of.~~ ^{touch On} Before 1836 "Speak Of" Changed to "touch On" in 1836.

33¹. Oft changed to ~~it~~ in 1827, ^{it} "it."

37¹. threescore replaced ~~"sixty"~~ in the ed. of 1827, ^{sixty} "sixty"

37¹. This also would increase his attachment to the land.

38¹. A dramatic suggestion of action on the boy's part.

Before 1802 these lines read:

let this sheepfold be
Thy anchor and thy shield; amid all fear
And all temptation, let it be to thee
An emblem of the life thy fathers lived.

41¹-14. After the fashion recorded in Scripture, the covenant is ratified by an external sign; cf. *Genesis*, ix, 13: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth"; *Exodus*, xxxi, 16: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant"; and *I. Samuel*, xviii, 3-4: "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, and Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David," etc.

423. This line was added in 1815; previously the following line had read:

Next morning, as had been resolv'd, the Boy

44. Notice how Wordsworth passes lightly over the crisis of anguish and sorrow (as he does also at l. 42) instead of harrowing the feelings by detailing it; the first word here is of *comfort*, not of sorrow, that springs from strength of love. This is characteristic of Wordsworth's attitude. Cheerfulness is with him a duty, a mark of a wholesome nature, the frame of mind needful for the attainment of truth. (Cf. *The Tables Turned*, l. 20.) Wordsworth would fain believe that in the world there is nothing in which there is not an over-balance of good; if there is such an experience, he certainly shuns presenting it in his poetry.

44. Before 1820 this line read :

Would break the heart:— Old Michael found it so.

45. There is a certain charm in the repetition of these lines (see ll. 43-4), as in the repetition in ll. 2, 32, and 48.

6. "From 1800 to 1827 the line closed with 'up upon the sun'; in 1832 the fault was removed. But when making the revision for 1836, Wordsworth decided reading 'up towards the sun' as a more plausible and accordingly he substituted the TO THE DAISY.

This is one of three poems addressed to the same flower, which were written in 1802 at Town-end, Grasmere; it was first published in 1807.

1-3. The reading in the text, adopted by M. Arnold, is that of the edition of 1827; the first edition differed in l. 3, reading:

Before 1840, A Pigeon bold in Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
In 1837 we find:

Confiding Flower, by Nature's care
Made bold,—who, lodging here and there,
Art all the long year through the heir

The reading finally adopted in 1840 is:

Bright Flower! whose home is everywhere!
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir

4. or changed to "and" in 1850.

6. Some concord. In 1837, "communion"; but all earlier and later editions read as in the text.

8. thorough. Thorough and through are variants of the same word; cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 3: "Thorough brush, thorough brier." Cf. note in *ancient Mariner*, l. 64

9. This is the reading of the edition of 1827 ; the earlier editions, and those of 1837 and subsequent years, read : "Is it that man is soon deprest?"

17-24. This stanza was omitted in eds. 1827 & 32, but found in all the other 9.

A third stanza is found in all the editions except those of 1827 and 1832 :

Thou wander'st the wide world about
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ;
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

The omission may have been due to the criticism to which Wordsworth refers in the following : "I have been censured for the last line but one—'thy function apostolical'—as being little less than profane.

How could it be thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission ; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in a humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes."

23. *It is not clear if the Daisy's function is apostolical is indicated in the previous stanza*
 "To Shelley," says Professor Dowden, "a flower is a thing of light and love,—bright with its yearning, pale with passion. To Thomson a flower is an object which has a certain shape and colour. To Wordsworth a flower is a living partaker of the common spiritual life and joy of being."

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

Composed 1803 ; published 1842. "For illustration," says Wordsworth, "see my sister's journal. It may be proper to add that the second of these pieces, though *felt* at the time, was not composed till many years after." The account in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal is as follows : "Thursday, August 18th.—Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. A bookseller accompanied us. He showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation, whitewashed. . . . Went on a visit to his grave. He lies at a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot ; but a hundred guineas

have been collected, to be expended on some sort of monument. . . . We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses [from *A Bard's Epitaph*].

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the way to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career,
Wild as the wave?
Here let him pause, and through a tear
Survey this grave.

The poor Inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follow laid him low
And stained his name.

I cannot take leave of the country which we passed through to-day without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains, within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighbourhood has with ours when he makes Skiddaw say—

Seurfell [Criffel] from the sky,
That Anadale [Annandale] doth crown, with a most amorous eye,
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threatening him!

These lines recurred to William's memory, and we talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions, including ourselves in the fancy, that we *might* have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."

Robert Burns, son of a poor Scottish farmer; wrote songs and other poems (in Scottish dialect—for the most part) for his own amusement and that of his immediate neighbours, depicting with great sincerity and power his own feelings and the life about him; failed in farming, and was about to emigrate when the unexpected success of a little volume of his poems (1786) drew him to Edinburgh, where he was for a time a great literary lion; returned to farming and married; again unsuccessful; obtained a small post as an excise-officer at Dumfries, his tendency to dissipation increased, health failed, died July 1st, 1795. (For an estimate of his character and genius, see Carlyle's essay.)

Wordsworth was drawn to Burns by the qualities of his poetry (see ll. 31-6 and note thereon), but, in character, one could scarcely find a greater contrast than between the self-contained, almost ascetic, eminently 'respectable' Englishman, and the pleasure-loving, reckless, Scottish poet. It is a testimony to the breadth of sympathy of the former that at a time when Burns' position was by no means so well assured as it is at present, Wordsworth was able to do justice, not merely to the genius, but to the better elements in the character of his predecessor. The tonic and bracing tone of these two poems, notwithstanding the nature of the theme, is markedly Wordsworthian.

The stanza of this piece was doubtless suggested by the lines quoted from Burns in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal; it was a favourite form with Burns.

17-18. **ought that hides**, etc. His high qualities, genius, etc., which overlie his lower qualities.

19-20. The reference is to Burns' well-known lines *To a Mountain Daisy*; the word "glinted," meaning 'glanced,' 'gleamed,' is quoted from the third stanza of that poem:

Cauld blew the bitter blighting north
Upon thy early, humble birth:
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm.

So "modest worth" is suggested by the opening line:

Wee, modest, crimson-tipp'd flow'r.

31-34. In 1845 changed to

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone
And showed my youth.

31-36. Wordsworth refers to the directness and simplicity of Burns' style, and the fact that his poetry treated of humble, actual life about him, as contrasted with the artificial style and themes of fashionable poetry of the day; cf. the sonnet beginning "A Poet! he hath put his heart to school" (p. 210 below).

39-40. **Criffel**, or **Crowfell**; a mountain 1,800 feet high, close to the shore of the Solway, near Dumfries, is visible from **Skiddaw**, a mountain in Cumberland, not very far from Wordsworth's residence.

49-50. See the lines from Burns' *A Bard's Epitaph* quoted in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal above.

53. **gowans.** The Scotch name for Daisies.

67. **he.** The son.

77-8. "This may refer to Burns' poem, *A Prayer in the Prospect of Death*" (Dowden).

83. Cf. *S. John* iv, 18.

The poet characteristically closes, not in sadness, but with an expression of faith that, in Burns' case, evil and sorrow are finally lost in the triumph of good.

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED ON THE DAY FOLLOWING.

Published in 1842; for time of composition see introductory note on previous poem.

"Left the Nith about a mile and a half, and reached Brownhill, a lonely inn, where we slept. The view from the windows was pleasing, though some travellers might have been disposed to quarrel with it for its general nakedness; yet there was abundance of corn. It is an open country—open, yet all over hills. At a little distance were many cottages among trees, that looked very pretty. Brownhill is about seven or eight miles from Ellisland. I fancied to myself, while I was sitting in the parlour, that Burns might have caroused there, for most likely his rounds extended so far, and the thought gave a melancholy interest to the smoky walls." (Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal.)

3. The reference is to Burns' poem, *The Vision*, where he imagines himself being crowned with holly by the Scottish muse.

10. **social grief.** Grief which we shared with one another.

28. **wont.** Were wont; past tense of the verb *won*, 'to be accustomed'; see note on *Lady of the Lake*, I, 408.

32. "Refers probably to the road to Brownhill, past Ellisland farmhouse, where Burns lived" (Knight).

42. That puts to shame poetry written by those who had enjoyed the highest academic training, and followed academic models.

61. In a letter dated Dec. 23, 1839, Wordsworth wrote : "The other day I chanced to be looking over a MS. poem belonging to the year 1803, though not actually composed till many years afterwards. It was suggested by visiting the neighbourhood of Dumfries in which Burns had resided, and where he died ; it concluded thus : 'Sweet mercy !' etc. I instantly added, the other day, 'But why to him confine,' etc. The more I reflect upon this, the more I feel justified in attaching small importance to any literary monument that I may be enabled to leave behind."

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Written between Sept. 13th, 1803, and May, 1805, when Dorothy Wordsworth copied it into her journal ; first published 1807. The following entry is from Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal under date Sept. 13 : "As we descended [they were near Loch Voil] the scene became more fertile, our way being pleasantly varied—through coppices or open fields, and passing farm-houses, though always with an intermixture of uncultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields were quietly—might I be allowed to say pensively ?—enlivened by small companies of reapers. It is not uncommon in the more lonely parts of the Highlands to see a single person so employed. The following poem was suggested to William by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson's 'Tour of Scotland.'" The following is the sentence referred to : "Passed a female who was reaping alone ; she sung in Erse as she bended over her sickle ; the sweetest human voice I ever heard ; her strains were tenderly melancholy, and felt delicious, long after they were heard no more."

Mr. A. J. George (*Selections from Wordsworth*) thus comments on this poem :—

"What poet ever produced such beauty and power with so simple materials ! The maiden, the latest lingerer in the field, is the medium through which the romance of Highland scenery, and the soul of solitary Highland life is revealed to us ; even her voice seems a part of nature, so mysteriously does it blend with the beauty of the scene. It is to such influences as this that the poet refers in the lines,—

And impulses of higher birth
Have come to him in solitude."

Before
10. In 1827 changed to : *scarcely to reposing (and),*
~~More welcome notes to weary lands.~~

"Wordsworth believed that he had used the word 'sweet' to excess throughout his poems, and in 1827 he removed it from ten passages; in later editions from fifteen additional passages" (Dowden).

13. The reading of the text was introduced in 1837; in 1807 this line read:

No sweeter voice was ever heard.

In 1827:

Such thrilling voice was never heard.

14. "~~In his Guide to the Lakes Wordsworth speaks of 'an imaginative influence in the voice of the cuckoo, when that voice has taken possession of a deep mountain valley' (Dowden).~~

Cf. ~~also his poem~~ *To the Cuckoo*, and the opening lines of his sonnet to the same bird:

Not the whole warbling grove in concert heard
When sunshine follows shower, the breast can thrill
Like the first summons, cuckoo! of thy bill.

15. Cf. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*:

And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea.

18. numbers. The stock poetical word for 'poetry.'

19. Professor Dowden quotes from ^{the entry} Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal* ~~for the day~~, which includes this poem: "William here conceived the notion of writing an ode upon the affecting subject of those relics of human society found in that grand and solitary region."

27. Note that the 3rd line of the stanza does not rhyme here, as it does in the previous stanzas.

29. ^{Before} ~~Changed~~ in 1820 ~~to:~~ *Till I had my fill*
I listened ~~motionless and still~~

30. when. "As" except in the editions 1827-32.

Professor Dowden notes the peculiar character of Arnold's text of this poem: "It may be noted that in his selections from Wordsworth Matthew Arnold manufactures a text from several editions, assuredly not a legitimate process. He retains 'So sweetly to reposing bands' from 1807-20; adopts 'A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard' from 1836-49; retains 'I listen'd till I had my fill,' from 1807-15; and gives 'when' in l. 30, which is found only in 1827-32."

ODE TO DUTY.

Written 1805 ; first published 1807. Wordsworth says : " This ode is on the model of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*,^X which is, in turn, an imitation of Horace's *Ode to Fortune* " [*Odes* I, 35.]

This is one of the finest examples of Wordsworth's power to elevate the homely and commonplace into the highest poetic sphere. In this case he throws the charm of imagination and sentiment, not about a person, or object, or incident of life, but about a feeling—a commonplace and, to the poetic temperament especially, a painful and oppressive feeling—that of moral obligation, that something ought to be done. But for Wordsworth this ever present element of life is desirable and beautiful,—a source of happiness and strength. Nor is there anything (as is often the case with the views of poets) fanciful, or overstrained, or abnormal in his conception ; it is based upon sound sense and upon daily experience. The Ode is an example of what Matthew Arnold held to be the true function of poetry,—“ the criticism of life,”—“ the powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life ” ; it is not didactic in tone, it does not preach ; it quickens the moral nature by the contagion of noble enthusiasm, by the power of insight and of truth.

It will be noted that in the poem, three possible attitudes towards duty seem before the writer's mind : (1) when what is right is done, not upon reflection and because it is right, but from natural impulse, because it is the congenial thing to do ; this condition characteristically associates, especially with youth, when the innate tendencies (which he regards as good) have not yet been weakened and corrupted by the experiences of life ; but this, though a delightful, is also but a transient and uncertain condition ; 2nd (the ordinary state of things), when right is done with struggle and against the grain ; 3rd—the highest condition as hinted in the Latin motto—when through custom, through the continued obedience to duty based upon reason and upon the perception that to do right is true happiness, duty has become second nature ; when what we would do and what we ought to do are the same, when service becomes perfect freedom.†

^X This Ode is the third selection in the Appendix to this volume.

† Cf. Tennyson's *Oenone* :

the full-grown will
Circled through all experience, pure law
Commeasure perfect freedom.

The Latin motto may be translated: "Good no longer by resolve, but brought by habit to such a point that I am not merely able to do right, but am *not* able to do otherwise."

1. Cf. the opening line of Gray's Ode, "Daughter of Jove, relentless power."

~~2. Cf. the opening of Paradise Lost, II. (see Selection 2, in Appendix.)~~

7. **vain temptations.** Temptations to vanity, i.e., to what is empty, not *real*, but only apparent good.

8. The reading of 1815 and subsequent editions; in 1807 the line stood:

From strife and from despair; a glorious ministry.

9. **There are who.** An imitation of the familiar Latin idiom, *sunt qui*.

9-14. Sometimes what is right is performed, not under any sense of restraint, or because it is our duty, but from natural good feeling.

12. Wordsworth habitually glorified the early natural impulses and feelings. Cf. *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, and "It is a beauteous evening," p. 206.

genial. Inborn, belonging to nature.

15-16. ~~The reading is that of the edition of 1827:~~ ^{The reading in the text was introduced in 1837.} In 1807 the lines stood:

Calp May joy be theirs while life shall last!
And thou, ~~etc~~ ^{if they should tatter, teach them to stand fast!}

2/ in 1837 the final reading was introduced:

~~Oh, if through confidence misplaced~~

~~They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power, around them cast.~~

<sup>Long may the kindly impulse last!
But there, etc.</sup>

19-20. Referring to the condition of things described in the previous stanza, when the right is done because it is *desirable* and *pleasurable* to us. "Joy is its own security," because joy (pleasure) leads us to do that which in its turn begets pleasure, and not pain, as would be the case if our impulses led us to do evil.

21-22. ^{Before 1827:} ~~The reading of 1807 was:~~

And bless'd are they who in the main
This faith, even now, do entertain,

~~The later reading was adopted in 1827.~~

24. This reading introduced in 1845 ; in 1807 the reading was : " Yet find that other strength " ; in 1837 : " Yet find thy firm support."

25. Cf. *The Prelude*, vi, 32-35 :

That over-love of freedom
Which encouraged me to turn
From regulations even of my own
As from restraints and bonds.

29-31. This reading was adopted in 1827 ; in 1807 the lines stood :

Resolved that nothing e'er should press
Upon my present happiness,
I shoved unwelcome tasks away ;

in 1815 :

Full oft, when in my heart was heard
My timely mandate, I deferred
The task imposed, from day to day ;

37. **unchartered freedom.** Unrestricted freedom ; cf. *As You Like It*, II, vii, 47-8 :

I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind.

Prof. Knight compares Churchill's line : " An Englishman in chartered freedom born," and doubtless the word was suggested to Wordsworth in connection with political freedom ; an Englishman's freedom is not power to do just as he likes ; it is constitutional, or chartered freedom.

38. Even the very young know something of this weight in holiday times, when there has been, during a prolonged period, an absence of fixed employments, and of calls which must be attended to.

39-40. I have become wearied of pursuing, now one hope or aim, now another, and desire the calmness which comes from seeking a single object—to do right.

At this point in the edition of 1807 there follows a stanza omitted in all subsequent editions :

Yet not the less could I throughout
Still act according to the voice
Of my own wish ; and feel past doubt
That my submissiveness was choice :
Not seeking in the school of pride
For "precepts over-dignified,"
Denial and restraint I prize
No farther than they breed a second Will more wise.

44. The satisfaction that accompanies the consciousness of having done right.

46. The idea of flowers springing up beneath the foot is a common one with the poets; the editors cite Persius, *Satire*, ii, 38: *Quidquid calcaverit hic, rosa fiat*, and Hesiod, *Theogony*, 194-5: ἀπὸ δὲ πόσιν ποσσὶν ὑπο παρῶσιν αἰζῶτο, 'thick sprouted the grass beneath the slender feet' (of the goddess); so Tennyson's *Oenone*, l. 94, and *Maud*, I, xii, 5.

45-48. The idea of duty is here extended from obedience to moral, to obedience, to natural law—an identification especially natural to a poet who finds so close a kinship between man and nature about him. Webb compares Wordsworth's *Gypsies*, ll. 21-2:

Oh better wrong and strife
(By nature transient) than this torpid life;
Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move.

An earlier text of this ode has been discovered in a proof copy of the sheets of 1807. It is interesting to note the great improvement Wordsworth made while the poem was passing through the press; the earlier version also serves to throw light upon the meaning of the later. The following are the first four stanzas:

There are who tread a blameless way
In purity, and love, and truth,
Though resting on no better stay
Than on the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do the right, and know it not:
May joy be theirs while life shall last,
And may a genial sense remain, when youth is past.

Serene would be our days and bright,
And happy would our nature be,
If Love were an unerring light;
And Joy its own security.
And bless'd are they who in the main,
This creed, even now, do entertain,
Do in this spirit live; yet know
That Man hath other hopes; strength which elsewhere must grow.

I, loving freedom and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
Resolv'd that nothing e'er should press
Upon my present happiness,
I shov'd unwelcome tasks away:
But henceforth I would serve; and strictly if I may.

cup.

O Power of DUTY ! sent from God
 To enforce on earth his high behest,
 And keep us faithful to the road
 Which conscience hath pronounc'd the best :
 Thou, who art Victory and Law
 When empty terrors overawe ;
 From vain temptations dost set free
 From Strife, and from Despair, a glorious ministry !

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

Written 1805 ; published 1807. The form of stanza adopted is that usually termed *Elegiac*, familiar through Gray's *Elegy* ; the matter is also in some measure elegiac from the constant reference to the death of the poet's brother John. He was drowned while in command of the East India ship, *The Earl of Abergavenny*, which through the incompetence of the pilot, on leaving Portland struck upon a reef and was lost, Feb. 6, 1805. The previous autumn he had visited his brother at Grasmere. See *To the Daisy* ("Sweet Flower, belike one day to have") for an account of the disaster and also the *Elegiac Stanzas in Memory of My Brother*. Wordsworth says in a letter : "The vessel 'struck' at 5 p.m. Guns were fired immediately, and were continued to be fired. She was gotten off the rock at half-past seven, but had taken so much water, in spite of constant pumping, as to be water-logged. They had, however, hope that she might be run upon Weymouth sands, and with this view continued pumping and bailing till eleven, when she went down. . . . A few minutes before the ship went down my brother was seen talking to the first mate with apparent cheerfulness ; he was standing at the point where he could overlook the whole ship the moment she went down—dying, as he had lived, in the very place and point where his duty called him. . . . I never wrote a line without the thought of giving *him* pleasure ; my writings were his delight, and one of the chief solaces of his long voyages. But let me stop. I will not be cast down ; were it only for his sake I will not be dejected."

The Peele Castle referred to is not the well-known one on the Isle of Man, but another, the name of which is usually spelled *Piel*, on the coast of Lancashire, near Barrow-in-Furness, and opposite the village of Rampside, where the poet spent four weeks of a vacation in 1794 (see ll. 1-2 of the poem). Sir George Beaumont, an intimate friend of Wordsworth, and in his own day a landscape painter of some note, painted two pictures of this castle, one of which was designed for Mrs. Wordsworth.

4. sleeping. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 54: "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank."

8. It trembled. Cf. *Influence of Natural Objects*, 1, 20.

14-16. The reading in the text is that of the first edition as well as of 1832 and subsequent editions. In 1820, however, for these masterly lines the poet substituted :

and add a gleam
Of lustre, known to neither sea or land
But borrowed from the youthful poet's dream.

which were retained in 1827 with the change, "the gleam [^] The lustre."

What the poet refers to, is the element that is added by the artist to every object he artistically depicts; he does not represent it exactly as it is, but contributes something from his own imagination—gives a charm, a beauty, a meaning to the object which he feels and puts there, and which is not present in the object itself.

24. This stanza with "a mine" instead of "divine" appeared in 1807 and 1815. 26. Here a stanza is inserted both in the earliest and latest editions, but omitted from 1820-45. *it was then omitted in 1820, and restored in its present form in 1845*

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house* divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

26 Elysian quiet. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II, vii, 37-8:

And there I'll rest, as after much turmoil
A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

27. illusion. In 1807 "delusion."

36 22. Cf. *Tintern Abbey*, l. 88, ff. :

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue.

also the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, 176, ff.

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;

* "A mine" in 1807

We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

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~~40-50~~. Cf. Tennyson's *Palace of Art*, where the life of sympathy with men is placed above the life that is devoted wholly to beauty, knowledge, and self-culture.

54, the Kind. The human race.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Published in 1807, with the following note appended :

"The above verses were written soon after tidings had been received of the death of Lord Nelson in the battle of Trafalgar, October 21st, 1805, which event directed the author's thoughts to the subject." But the poet elsewhere dates them 1806, and there is other evidence to show that they were at least not finished until early in 1806.

Wordsworth says that while "many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in (Nelson's) conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish" on account of "one great crime," his connection with Lady Hamilton; the poet adds that "many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John."

5. **childish** replaced by "boyish" in 1845—a manifest improvement.

9. This line is an Alexandrine, *i.e.*, consists of six syllables.

15-18. "One of the lessons which Wordsworth is never tired of enforcing, the lesson that virtue grows by the strenuousness of its exercise, that it gains strength as it wrestles with pain and difficulty, and converts the shocks of circumstances into an energy of its proper glow" (Myers).

30. Webb quotes *Romans*, III, 8: "Some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose condemnation is just."

31. And *where* what, *etc.*

33. Changed in 1837 to "He labours good on good to fix."

38. Cf. Milton's sonnet *To Lady Margaret Ley* :

Daughter to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who lived in both unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, *more in himself content*.

49-50. With the old pronunciation of "joined," now obsolete except among the uneducated, the rhyme would be perfect.

51-2. Cf. Southey's account in chap. vii of his *Life of Nelson* : "No sooner was he in battle, where his squadron was received with the fire of more than a thousand guns, than, as if that artillery, like music, had driven away all care and painful thoughts, his countenance brightened, and his conversation became joyous, animated, elevated, and delightful."

54. "His anticipations are justified by the event" (Webb).

76. Wordsworth, in a note on this line, quotes from *The Flowre and the Leafe* :

For knightes ever should be persevering,
To seek honour without feintise or slouth,
Fro wele to better in all manner thinge.

78. Webb quotes Goldsmith's *Taking of Quebec* :

Yet shall they know thou conquerest, though dead!
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise.

79. The reading of 1807, changed in 1837 to

Or he must fall and sleep without his fame.

and in 1840 to

Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame.

82. **mortal mist.** The dimness of sight that accompanies the approach of death.

"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU SURELY ART."

Wordsworth himself said that this was written at Town-end, Grasmere, in 1806, but Mrs. Wordsworth corrects this statement in a note, and says it was written at Coleorton. The latter was Sir George Beaumont's place in Leicestershire, where the Wordsworths passed the winter 1806-7. There are no nightingales at Grasmere, but they abound at Coleorton, but would be absent in winter. The poem was published in 1807.

Wordsworth's preference for the song of the stockdove above that of the nightingale (which has always been a favourite of the poets) is highly significant of the whole character and genius of the man. His own song is not that of passion, of tumult, and overmastering inspiration, but of peaceful and permanent solace, of serious thought and inner harmony. The date of this poem separates it from those contained in the Selections hitherto; and, in this connection, the prominence given to the symbolism of the two natural objects delineated, should be noted. (See introductory note to *The Primrose of the Rock*).

2. **fiery heart.** Wordsworth in his text marks these words as a quotation; see *3 Henry VI.*, I, iv, 87: "What, hath thy fiery heart so parch'd thy entrails?"

4. "In his modernization of *The Cuckoo and Nightingale*, Wordsworth speaks of the *loud rioting* of the nightingale's voice; nothing corresponding is found in the original" (Dowden).

11. **stockdove.** "Mr. Wintringham in *The Birds of Wordsworth*, maintains that the poet here and in *Resolution and Independence* ("Over his own sweet voice the stockdove broods") confused the wood-pigeon, or ringdove, with the stockdove. The stockdove's voice has been compared, he says, to a grunt; the wood-pigeon's is the sweet *coo rōō, coo coo*" (Dowden). Cf. Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, III, 39-40:

In answer coo'd the cushat dove [*i.e.*, wood-pigeon]
Her notes of peace and rest and love.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

Written and published in 1820, addressed to the poet's brother Christopher, at that time rector of Lambeth, subsequently Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. The poem refers to the familiar English custom of the village choir singing and playing anthems from house to house on Christmas eve.

5-6. An example of the poet's close observation of nature.

42. Of the children.

49-50. The fields and streams about Cocker mouth and Hawkshead.

51. **Cytherea's zone.** "Cytherea, a name for Venus, who was said to have sprung from the foam of the sea near Cythera, now Cerigo, an

island on the south-east of the Morea. On her zone, or cestus, were represented all things tending to excite love" (Dowden).

52. the Thunderer. Jupiter.

55-60. In his later life Wordsworth grew strongly conservative.

65. **Lambeth's venerable towers.** Lambeth palace on the banks of the Thames in greater London, the official residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

73-4. A fine example of the poet's masterly diction.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

Written at Rydal Mount in 1831; published in 1835. "The Rock," says Wordsworth, "stands on the right hand, a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described."

This is a poem of Wordsworth's old age. With Wordsworth, as age advanced, the objective fact,—the picture, incident, the concrete subject—counted for less, while the abstract truth, the lesson of the fact counted for more. Mr. R. H. Hutton (*On Wordsworth's Two Styles, Wordsworthiana*, p. 63, ff.) in order to exemplify the poet's later style contrasts this poem with *Daffodils*. "The great beauty of *Daffodils*," he says, "is its wonderful buoyancy, its purely objective way of conveying that buoyancy, and the extraordinary vividness with which 'the lonely rapture of lonely minds' is stamped upon the whole poem, which is dated 1804. Now turn to *The Primrose of the Rock*, which was written twenty-seven years later, in 1831. We find the style altogether more ideal—reality counts for less, symbol for more. There is far less elasticity, far less exultant buoyancy here, and yet a grander and more stately movement. The reserve of power has almost disappeared; but there is a graciousness absent before, and the noble strength of the last verse is most gentle strength. It will be observed at once that in *The Daffodils* there is no attempt to explain the delight which the gay spectacle raised in the poet's heart. He exults in the spectacle itself, and reproduces it continually in memory. The wind in his style blows as the wind blows in *The Daffodils*, with a sort of physical rapture. In the later poem the symbol is everything. The mind pours itself forth in reflective gratitude, as it glances at the moral overthrow which the humble primrose

of the rock—and many things of human mould as humble and faithful as the primrose of the rock—has outlived. In point of mere expression, I should call the later poem the more perfect of the two. The enjoyment of the first lies in the intensity of the feeling which it somehow indicates without expressing, of which it merely hints the force by its eager and springy movement." The calm, lucid serenity of thought and style in the poem before us is doubtless admirable; but the whole conception and art of *The Daffodils* seems to the present editor, something, from the purely poetic point of view, altogether rarer and finer than anything in the later poem.

7-10. The primrose had been noted by the poet in 1802; under date April 24th of that year, his sister writes in her Journal: "We walked in the evening to Rydal. Coleridge and I lingered behind. We all stood to look at Glow-worm Rock—a primrose that grew there, and just looked out on the road from its own sheltered bower." In his note Mr. Webb gives a long list of wars and battles between 1802 and 1831, e.g., the Napoleonic wars, the war of 1812, the Greek insurrection, 1821, the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (1806), second French Revolution, 1830, etc.

11-12. Cf. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, I, i, 3: "When a man . . . seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair;" so *Faery Queen*, I, v, 25. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II, represents the earth as literally hanging from heaven by a golden chain, and King Arthur, in *Morte d'Arthur*, speaking of prayer, says:

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

37-42. One of the poet's favourite themes—evil and suffering ultimately the sources of good.

41. *Genesis*, iii, 17-18: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

49-50. This prevision of immortality comes to those who are humble in heart.

Professor Dowden compares this poem with Tennyson's "Flower in the crannied wall"; Tennyson's mood, he says, is one of awed inquisition, Wordsworth's, of faith.

"FAIR STAR OF EVENING."

First published in 1807. Taking advantage of the Peace of Amiens, Wordsworth and his sister visited France in the summer of 1802. The following extract is from Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal: "We arrived at Calais at four o'clock on Sunday morning, the 31st of July. We had delightful walks after the heat of the day was passed – seeing far off in the west the coast of England, like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the evening star, and the glory of the sky; the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself; purple waves brighter than precious stones, forever melting upon the sands."

10. The reading was amended in 1837 into "that is England; there she lies."

"IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF."

Written 1802 or 1803, at a time when an invasion by Napoleon was expected; printed in *The Morning Post*, April 16, 1803, and included in the 1807 edition of Wordsworth's poems.

4. The quotation is from Daniel's *Civil War*, II, vii.

5-6. The lines in the text were substituted in 1827 for

Road by which all might come and go that would,
And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands.

"The opposition between 'British freedom' and what he deemed its 'salutary bonds' would naturally occur to Wordsworth in days not long before Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill" (Dowden).

"IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING."

Composed on the beach near Calais in August, 1802; first published in 1807.

1. Changed in 1837 to:

Air sleeps,—from strife or stir the clouds are free;

in 1840 to

A fairer face of evening cannot be;

in 1845 the poet returns to the earliest reading, the one in the text.

6. In 1837 changed to "broods o'er the sea."

11-16. Cf. the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* for the idea of childhood's openness to the influence of the divine in nature.

12. Abraham's bosom. See *Luke*, xvi, 19-25.

PERSONAL TALK.

Written 1806(?) ; published 1807.

6. maidens withering on the stalk. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 76-8 :

But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that which withering on the virgin thorn
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

7. forms of chalk to guide the dancers.

9-12. Webb compares Cowper, *Task*, iv, 277-97 :—

Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight ; such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all.

'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought.

12. Wordsworth says that this line "stood, at first, better and more characteristically, thus :

By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire.

My sister and I were in the habit of having the tea-kettle in our little sitting room : and we toasted the bread ourselves." This was in Dove Cottage.

Here follows in the original text the second sonnet of the series, which is, however, omitted in Arnold's Selections.

CONTINUED.

1. Wings have we, *i.e.*, we have mental powers which enable us to rise above our immediate surroundings.

2-4. The grand aspects of nature strengthen the tendency to see the great and noble aspects of commonplace things ; to see and register in

poetry these nobler aspects is Wordsworth's great aim ; he attempts by "Verse to build a princely throne on humble truth" (*At the Grave of Burns*, 35-6). Elsewhere he describes the poet's work :

The outward shows of sky and earth
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him from solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart ;
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

—(*A Poet's Epitaph.*)

9-12. This reading was substituted in 1827 for the earlier one :

There do I find a never-failing store
Of personal themes, and such as I love best ;
Matter wherein right voluble I am ;
Two will I mention, dearer than the rest.

13-14. **The gentle Lady.** Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Una. The heroine of the first book of the *Faery Queen*, who in the opening stanzas is described as leading a lamb.

"Wordsworth pronounced *Othello*, Plato's record of the last scenes of the career of Socrates (the *Apology*), and Walton's *Life of George Herbert*, the most pathetic of human compositions" (Dowden).

AFTERTHOUGHT.

This is the concluding sonnet of a series of twenty-four, which follow the course of the river Duddon from its source to its mouth. They were written at various times and published in 1820.

3. **Duddon.** "The river Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland and Lancashire ; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum" (Wordsworth).

5. **and shall not cease to glide.** This is the reading of the 2nd edition of 1820 ; in 1840 the poet returned to the reading of the 1st ed. : "and shall forever glide."

Cf. *The Fountain* :

"Twill murmur on a thousand years
And flow as now it flows,

and Tennyson's *Brook*:

Men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

7-10. There is a reminiscence here, as Wordsworth in a note hints, of a passage in Moschus' *Epitaph upon Bion*, ll. 106-111:

αἰαὶ ταὶ μαλάχαι μὲν ἐπὶ κατὰ κᾶπον ὀλῶνται
ἢ δὲ τὰ χλωρὰ σελινα τό τ' εὐθαλὲς οὖλον ἀνηθον,
ὕστερον αὖ ζῶνται καὶ εἰς ἔτος ἄλλο φύονται
ἄμμες δ' οἱ μεγάλοι καὶ καρτεροί, οἱ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες,
ὅπποτε πρᾶτα θάνωμες ἀνάκοοι ἐν χθοὶ κοιλα
εὐδομες εὖ μάλα μακρὸν ἀτερμονα νηγρετον ὕπνον,

thus translated by Lang: "Ah me! when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again. and spring in another year; but we men, we the great and mighty or wise, when once we have died, in hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence; a right long, and endless, and unawakening sleep."

9, fol. Note how the poet turns from what is depressing, to a comforting and bracing thought.

14. Wordsworth quotes, in his note on this line, *Paradise Lost*, viii, 282: "And feel that I am happier than I know."

SCORN NOT THE SONNET.

Published in 1827, and composed perhaps in the same year, "almost extempore in a short walk on the western side of Rydal Lake."

1-2. The sonnet was introduced from Italy into English literature by Wyatt and Surrey, in the reign of Henry VIII., and became an extremely popular form. After the Restoration (1660) it, however, practically ceased to be written, and only grew into favour again with the new movement in literature in the latter part of the 18th century; Wordsworth and Coleridge were the first great poets to employ it frequently. Accordingly, conservative criticism looked coldly upon this form.

3. Shakespeare wrote a long connected series of sonnets, which, by the majority of critics, are held to express certain experiences and feelings of his own life.

4. **Petrarch.** (1304-74.) Italian poet, one of the earliest of the great names in modern literature, and the first to give vogue to the sonnet. His sonnets chiefly treat of his unrequited passion for a certain lady named Laura.

5. **Tasso.** (1544-95.) Italian poet, author of the epic *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, on the subject of Godfrey de Bouillon and the Crusaders; his sonnets are addressed to the sister of the Duke of Ferrara.

6. Changed in 1837 to "With it Camoens soothed."

Camoens. Portuguese poet who, in 1556 was banished to Macao, a Portuguese settlement in China, and there wrote many sonnets and lyrics. His chief work is the *Lusiad*.

7-9. **Dante.** (1265-1321.) A Florentine, the greatest of Italian poets, and one of the greatest of all poets; his chief work is the *Divine Comedy*, in which is presented a vision of Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell (hence "visionary brow"); many of his sonnets are found in his *Vita Nuova*, written in his twenty-eighth year, at a happy epoch of his life (hence "gay myrtle leaf," the myrtle being emblematic of joy, as the "cypress" of sadness and death). His later life was passed in exile from his native city, and in sadness. ^{and love}

9-11. Spenser's sonnets, like Shakespeare's, form a series, and narrate the story of his love and marriage; they are not by any means his most successful work, and, while possessing charm and beauty, are greatly inferior in power to those of Shakespeare or Milton; hence, presumably, "mild glow-worm lamp."

Faery-land. The scene of his great poem, *The Faery Queen*.

dark-ways. A reference to the misfortunes of his actual life; he was under the necessity of living in Ireland—which then meant an almost total banishment from society and the advantages of cultivated life; his house was sacked and burned, and he died in poverty in London.

11-12. Milton's sonnets, chiefly written between 1638 and 1658, "are the few occasional strains that connect as by intermittent trumpet blasts through twenty years, the rich minor poetry of his youth and early manhood with the greater poetry of his declining years." (Masson). The word 'damp' is appropriate because the conflicts between king and parliament enforced him to quit the more congenial paths of poetry for the work of political and religious controversy.

14. **soul-animating strains.** See, for example, those *On his Blindness, On the Late Massacre in Piedmont, To Cromwell* (~~in~~ Appendix to this volume).

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Written in 1831, and included in *Yarrow Revisited and Other Poems*, 1835. Wordsworth says: "I first became acquainted with this great and amiable man—Sir Walter Scott—in the year 1803, when my sister and I, making a tour in Scotland, were hospitably received by him in Lasswade, upon the banks of the Esk, where he was then living. We saw a good deal of him in the course of the following week; the particulars are given in my sister's Journal of that tour." In regard to the circumstances which occasioned this sonnet, Wordsworth says: "In the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott before his departure for Italy. This journey had been delayed by an inflammation in my eyes till we found that the time appointed for his leaving home would be too near for him to receive us without considerable inconvenience. Nevertheless we proceeded and reached Abbotsford on Monday. I was then scarcely able to lift up my eyes to the light. How sadly changed did I find him from the man so healthy, gay and hopeful a few years before! . . . On Tuesday morning Sir Walter Scott accompanied us and most of the party to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. When we alighted from the carriage he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting those favourite haunts. Of that excursion the verses *Yarrow Revisited* are a memorial. . . . On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of the carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream that there flows somewhat rapidly; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eildon Hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet beginning—"A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain."

According to the old legend, the hill originally had only one peak, but was cleft by the wizard, Michael Scott; cf. *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, II, 144:

And, warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon Hills in three.

14. **Soft Parthenope.** *Parthenope*, the ancient name of Naples; *soft* in reference to the climate.

“A POET!—HE HATH PUT HIS HEART TO SCHOOL.”

Published in 1842; written “perhaps between 1838 and 1842” (Dowden).

“I was impelled to write this sonnet,” said Wordsworth, “by the disgusting frequency with which the word *artistical*, imported with other impertinences from the Germans, is employed by writers of the present day; for *artistical* let them substitute *artificial*, and the poetry written on this system both at home and abroad, will be for the most part better characterized.”

Cf. with this sonnet the description of the true poet in *A Poet's Epitaph*.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

SELECTIONS FOR "SIGHT" READING.

I.—SIR PATRICK SPENS.

The king sits in Dunfermline town,
Drinking the blude-red wine ;
"O whare will I get a skeely skipper,
To sail this new ship of mine !"

O up and spake an eldern knight, 5
Sat at the king's right knee.—
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
That ever sail'd the sea."

Our king has written a braid letter,
And seal'd it with his hand, 10
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

"To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway, 15
'Tis thou maun bring her hame."

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Sae loud loud laughed he ;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his e'e. 20

"O wha is this has done this deed,
And tauld the king o' me,
To send us out, at this time of the year,
To sail upon the sea ?

APPENDIX.

" Be it wind, be it weat, be it hail, be it sleet, 25
Our ship must sail the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame."

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn,
Wi' a' the speed they may ;
They hae landed in Noroway,
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
In Noroway, but twac,
When that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say,—

“Ye Scottishmen spend a’ our king’s goud,
And a’ our queenis fee.”
“Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud !
Fu’ loud I hear ye lie. 40

“ For I brought as much white monie,
As gaue my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou o’ gude red goud,
Out o’er the sea wi’ me.

"Make ready, make ready, my merry-men a' ! 45
Our gude ship sails the morn."
"Now, ever alake, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm !

"I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm ;
And, if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm."

50

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud, 55
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the topmasts lap,
It was sic a deadly storm ;
And the waves cam o'er the broken ship,
Till a' her sides were torn.

I. SIR PATRICK SPENS.

- “O where will I get a gude sailor,
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall top-mast,
To see if I can spy land?”
- “O here am I, a sailor gude, 65
To take the helm in hand,
Till you go up to the tall top-mast;
But I fear you’ll ne’er spy land.”
- He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane, 70
When a bout flew out of our goodly ship,
And the salt sea it came in.
- “Gae, fetch a web o’ the silken claith,
Another o’ the twine,
And wap them into our ship’s side, 75
And let na the sea come in.”
- They fetched a web o’ the silken claith,
Another of the twine,
And they wapped them round that gude ship’s side,
But still the sea came in. 80
- O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heel’d shoon!
But lang or a’ the play was play’d,
They wat their hats aboon.
- And mony was the feather-bed, 85
That flattered on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord’s son,
That never mair cam hame.
- The ladyes wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair, 90
A’ for the sake of their true loves;
For them they’ll see na mair.
- O lang, lang, may the ladyes sit,
Wi’ their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens 95
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang, may the maidens sit,
 Wi' their goud kains in their hair,
 A' waiting for their ain dear loves !
 For them they'll see na mair. 100

O forty miles off Aberdeen,
 'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
 And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
 Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

—*Old Ballad.*

2.—INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD BOOK OF ‘PARADISE LOST.’

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born !
 Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee unblamed ? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproachèd light
 Dwelt from eternity —dwelt then in thee, 5
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate !
 Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell ? Before the Sun,
 Before the Heavens, thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest 10
 The rising World of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless Infinite !
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escaped the Stygian Pool, though long detained
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight, 15
 Through utter and through middle Darkness borne,
 With other notes than to the Orphean lyre
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20
 Though hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp ; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn ;
 So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs, 25
 Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more

3.—HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song ; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, 30
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit : nor sometimes forget
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides, 35
The Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old :
Then feed on thoughts that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers ; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40
Seasons return ; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine ;
But cloud instead and ever-during dark 45
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate ; there plant eyes ; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

—Milton.

3.—HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

Daughter of Jove, relentless Power,
Thou Tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour
The Bad affright, afflict the Best !
Bound in thy adamant chain
The Proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple Tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy Sire to send on earth
 Virtue, his darling Child, designed, 10
 To thee he gave the heav'nly Birth,
 And bade to form her infant mind.
 Stern rugged Nurse ! thy rigid lore
 With patience many a year she bore ;
 What sorrow was, thou had'st her know, 15
 And from her own she learned to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly
 Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
 Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
 And leave us leisure to be good. 20
 Light they disperse, and with them go
 The summer Friend, the flatt'ring Foe ;
 By vain Prosperity received,
 To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb arrayed 25
 Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,
 And Melancholy, silent maid
 With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
 Still on thy solemn steps attend ;
 Warm Charity, the general Friend, 30
 With Justice to herself severe,
 And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh, gently on thy Suppliant's head,
 Dread Goddess, lay thy chast'ning hand !
 Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad, 35
 Nor circled with the vengeful Band
 (As by the Impious thou art seen)
 With thund'ring voice, and threat'ning mien,
 With screaming Horror's funeral cry,
 Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty. 40

Thy form benign, oh Goddess, wear,
 Thy milder influence impart,
 Thy philosophic train be there
 To soften, not to wound my heart,

5.—CONCLUSION OF “THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.”

The gen'rous spark extinct revive, 45
Teach me to love and to forgive,
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are, to feel, and know myself a Man.
—*T. Gray.*

4.—WOLSEY.

FROM THE “VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.”

In full-blown dignity see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand :
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign,
Thro' him the rays of regal bounty shine,
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows, 5
His smile alone security bestows :
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r ;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted left him none to seize. 10
At length his sov'reign frowns ;—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where-e'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye ;
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly :
Now drops at once the pride of awful state, 15
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest. 20
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.
—*Samuel Johnson.*

5.—CONCLUSION OF “THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.”

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find ?
Must dull Suspense corrupt the stagnant mind ?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate

Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise, 5
 No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?—
 Enquirer, cease ; petitions yet remain,
 Which Heav'n may hear ; nor deem religion vain.
 Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
 But leave to Heav'n the measure and the choice ; 10
 Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
 The secret ambush of a specious pray'r.
 Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
 Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
 Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires, 15
 And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
 Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resign'd ;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill ;
 For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill ; 20
 For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat ;
 These goods for man the laws of Heav'n ordain ;
 These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain ;
 With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind, 25
 And makes the happiness she does not find.

—*Samuel Johnson.*

6.—THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL.

A PICTURE AT FANO.

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
 That child, when thou hast done with him, for me !
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 And time come, for departure, thou, suspending 5
 Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
 Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
 From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
 —And suddenly my head is covered o'er 10
 With those wings, white above the child who prays

7.—A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.

Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee guarding
Me, out of all the world ; for me, discarding
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head' 15
 Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
 Thou bird of God ! And wilt thou bend me low
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether 20
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread ?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
 Pressing the brain which too much thought expands, 25
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
 And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired !
 I think how I should view the earth and skies 30
And see, when once again my brow was bared
 After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it ! All is beauty :
And knowing this is love, and love is duty,
 What further may be sought for or declared ? 35

—*R. Browning.*

7.—“A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.”

A slumber did my spirit seal ;
 I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ; 5
 She neither hears nor sees ;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
 With rocks, and stones, and trees !

—*Wordsworth.*

8.—THE SCHOLAR.

My days among the Dead are passed ;
 Around me I behold,
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old :
 My never-failing friends are they 5
 With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
 And seek relief in woe ;
 And while I understand and feel
 How much to them I owe, 10
 My cheeks have often been bedewed
 With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead ; with them
 I live in long-past years,
 Their virtues love, their faults condemn, 15
 Partake their hopes and fears,
 And from their lessons seek and find
 Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead ; anon
 My place with them will be, 20
 And I with them shall travel on
 Through all futurity ;
 Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
 That will not perish in the dust.

—*R. Southey.*

9.—OLD JANE.

I love old women best, I think :
 She knows a friend in me,—
 Old Jane, who totters on the brink
 Of God's Eternity ;
 Whose limbs are stiff, whose cheek is lean, 5
 Whose eyes look up, afraid ;
 Though you may gather she has been
 A little laughing maid.

10.—BOADICEA.

Once had she with her doll what times,
 And with her skipping-rope ! 10
 Her head was full of lovers' rhymes,
 Once, and her heart of hope ;
 Who, now, with eyes as sad as sweet,—
 I love to look on her,—
 At corner of the gusty street, 15
 Asks, "Buy a pencil, Sir?"

Her smile is as the litten West,
 Nigh-while the sun is gone ;
 She is more fain to be at rest
 Than here to linger on : 20
 Beneath her lids the pictures flit
 Of memories far-away :
 Her look has not a hint in it
 Of what she sees to-day.

—*T. Ashe.*

10.—BOADICEA.

When the British warrior queen,
 Bleeding from the Roman rods,
 Sought, with an indignant mien,
 Counsel of her country's gods ;

Sage beneath a spreading oak 5
 Sat the Druid, hoary chief ;
 Every burning word he spoke
 Full of rage, and full of grief.

"Princess ! if our aged eyes
 Weep upon thy matchless wrongs, 10
 'Tis because resentment ties
 All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish—write that word
 In the blood that she has spilt ;
 Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd, 15
 Deep in ruin as in guilt.

- “Rome, for empire far renown’d,
 Tramples on a thousand states ;
 Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
 Hark ! the Gaul is at her gates ! 20
- “Other Romans shall arise,
 Heedless of a soldier’s name ;
 Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
 Harmony the path to fame.
- “Then the progeny that springs 25
 From the forests of our land,
 Arm’d with thunder, clad with wings,
 Shall a wider world command.
- “Regions Caesar never knew 30
 Thy posterity shall sway ;
 Where his eagles never flew,
 None invincible as they.”
- Such the bard’s prophetic words,
 Pregnant with celestial fire,
 Bending as he swept the chords 35
 Of his sweet but awful lyre.
- She, with all a monarch’s pride,
 Felt them in her bosom glow ;
 Rush’d to battle, fought, and died ;
 Dying hurl’d them at the foe : 40
- “Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
 Heaven awards the vengeance due ;
 Empire is on us bestow’d,
 Shame and ruin wait for you.”

— *W. Cowper.*

11.—PROUD MAISIE.

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
 Walking so early ;
 Sweet Robin sits on the bush
 Singing so rarely.

12.—MY LAST DUCHESS.

“Tell me, thou bonny bird,
 When shall I marry me?” 5
 —“When six braw gentlemen
 Kirkward shall carry ye.”
 “Who makes the bridal bed,
 Birdie, say truly?” 10
 —“The gray-headed sexton
 That delves the grave duly.
 “The glowworm o’er grave and stone
 Shall light thee steady ;
 The owl from the steeple sing 15
 ‘Welcome, proud lady.’”

—*Scott.*

12.—MY LAST DUCHESS.

FERRARA.

That’s my last Duchess painted on the wall,
 Looking as if she were alive. I call
 That piece a wonder, now : Frà Pandolf’s hands
 Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
 Will ’t please you sit and look at her ? I said 5
 “Frà Pandolf” by design : for never read
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
 The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
 But to myself they turned (since none puts by
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10
 And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
 How such a glance came there ; so, not the first
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, ’t was not
 Her husband’s presence only, called that spot
 Of joy into the Duchess’ cheek : perhaps 15
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say “Her mantle laps
 Over my lady’s wrist too much,” or “Paint
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half-flush that dies along her throat” : such stuff
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough 20
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had
 A heart—how shall I say ?—too soon made glad,

Too easily impressed ; she liked whate'er
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
 Sir, 't was all one ! My favour at her breast, 25
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,
 The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech, 30
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good ! but thanked
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
 This sort of trifling ? Even had you skill 35
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, “Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me ; here you miss,
 Or there exceed the mark ”—and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
 —E'en then would be some stooping ; and I choose
 Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
 Whene'er I passed her ; but who passed without
 Much the same smile ? This grew ; I gave commands 45
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
 As if alive. Will 't please you rise ? We'll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat,
 The Count your master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence 50
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed ;
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, 55
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me !

—*R. Browning.*

13.—UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY.

13.—UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY.

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY.)

I.

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square ;
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there !

II.

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least !
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast ; 5
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

III.

Well now, look at our villa ! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull !
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool. 10

IV.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses ! Why ?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye !
Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry ;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by ;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high ; 15
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

V.

What of a villa ? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights :
You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and
wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint gray olive-trees. 20

VI.

Is it better in May, I ask you ? You've summer all at once ;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell. 25

VII.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
 In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foam-bows flash
 On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
 Round the lady atop in her coach—fifty gazers do not abash,
 Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of
 sash.

30

VIII.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,
 Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger.
 Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,
 Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.
 Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,
 And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
 Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of fever and chill.

35

IX.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
 No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in:
 You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
 By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws
 teeth;
 Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
 At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot!
 And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.
 Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
 And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the
 Duke's!
 Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so
 Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, St. Jerome and Cicero,
 “And moreover,” (the sonnet goes rhyming,) “the skirts of St. Paul
 has reached,
 Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he
 preached.”
 Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling
 and smart,
 With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her
 heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
 No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

11.—ESTRANGEMENT.

x.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear ! fowls, wine, at double the rate. 55
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the
gate

It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city !
Beggars can scarcely be choosers : but still—ah, the pity, the pity !
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,
And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow candles ;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles, 61
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of
scandals :

Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.

Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life !

—*Robert Browning.*

14.—ESTRANGEMENT.

The path from me to you that led,
Untrodden long, with grass is grown,—
Mute carpet that his lieges spread
Before the Prince Oblivion
When he goes visiting the dead. 5

And who are they but who forget ?
You, who my coming could surmise
Ere any hint of me as yet
Warned other ears and other eyes,
See the path blurred without regret. 10

But when I trace its windings sweet
With saddened steps, at every spot
That feels the memory in my feet,
Each grass-blade turns forget-me-not,
Where murmuring bees your name repeat. 15

—*J. R. Lowell.*

15.—“THE GIRT WOAK TREE THAT’S IN THE DELL.”¹

The girt woak tree that’s in the dell !
 There’s noo tree I do love so well ;
 Vor times an’ times when I wer young,
 I there’ve a-climb’d, an’ there’ve a-zwung, 5
 An’ pick’d the eäcorns green, a-shed
 In wrestlèn storms vrom his broad head.
 An’ down below’s the eloty brook
 Where I did vish with line an’ hook,
 An’ beät, in play’some dips an’ zwims,
 The foamy stream, wi’ white-skinn’d lim’s. 10
 An’ there my mother nimbly shot
 Her knittèn-needles, as she zot
 At evenèn down below the wide
 Woak’s head, wi’ father at her zide.
 An’ I’ve a played wi’ many a bwoy, 15
 That’s now a man an’ gone away ;
 Zoo I do like noo tree so well
 ’S the girt woak tree that’s in the dell.

An’ there, in læäter years, I roved
 Wi’ thik poor maid I fondly lov’d,— 20
 The maid too feäir to die so soon,—
 When evenèn twilight, or the moon,
 Cast light enough ’ithin the pleäce
 To show the smiles upon her feäce,
 Wi’ eyes so clear’s the glassy pool, 25
 An’ lips an’ cheäks so soft as wool.
 There han’ in han’, wi’ bosoms warm,
 Wi’ love that burn’d but thought noo harm,
 Below the wide-bough’d tree we past
 The happy hours that went too vast ; 30
 An’ though she’ll never be my wife,
 She’s still my læäden star o’ life.
 She’s gone : an’ she’ve a-left to me
 Her mem’ry in the girt woak tree ;
 Zoo I do love noo tree so well 35
 ’S the girt woak tree that’s in the dell.

¹ In Dorsetshire dialect.

16.—HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD.

An' oh ! mid never ax nor hook
 Be brought to spweil his steätely look ;
 Nor ever roun' his ribby zides
 Mid eattle rub ther heäiry hides ; 40
 Nor pigs rout up his turf, but keep
 His lwonesome sheäde vor harmless sheep ;
 An' let en grow, an' let en spread,
 An' let en live when I be dead.
 But oh ! if men should come an' vell 45
 The girt woak tree that's in the dell,
 An' build his planks 'ithin the zide
 O' zome girt ship to plough the tide,
 Then, life or death ! I'd goo to sea,
 A sailen wi' the girt woak tree : 50
 An' I upon his planks would stand,
 An' die a-fightèn vor the land,—
 The land so dear,—the land so free,—
 The land that bore the girt woak tree ;
 Vor I do love noo tree so well 55
 'S the girt woak tree that's in the dell.

—*W. Barnes.*

16.—HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD.

Oh, to be in England now that April's there,
 And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning, unaware,
 That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough 5
 In England—now !
 And after April, when May follows
 And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows !
 Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover 10
 Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
 That's the wise thrush : he sings each song twice over
 Lest you should think he never could recapture
 The first fine careless rapture !

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew, 15
 And will be gay when noontide wakes anew
 The buttercups, the little children's dower
 —Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower !
—*R. Browning.*

17.—TO A WATERFOWL.

Whither, 'midst falling dew,
 While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
 Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
 Thy solitary way ?

Vainly the fowler's eye 5
 Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
 As darkly seen against the crimson sky,
 Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
 Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide, 10
 Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
 On the chafed ocean side ?

There is a Power whose care
 Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
 The desert and illimitable air,— 15
 Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
 At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere ;
 Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
 Though the dark night is near. 20

And soon that toil shall end ;
 Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
 And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend
 Soon o'er thy shelter'd nest.

Thou'rt gone ; the abyss of heaven 25
 Hath swallow'd up thy form ; yet on my heart
 Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
 And shall not soon depart.

19.—AFTER SUNSET.

He who, from zone to zone,
 Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight, 30
 In the long way that I must tread alone,
 Will lead my steps aright.

— *W. C. Bryant.*

18.—OZYMANDIAS.

I met a traveller from an antique land
 Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command, 5
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, (stamped on these lifeless things,)
 The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
 And on the pedestal these words appear :
 “ My name is Ozymandias, king of kings : 10
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair ! ”
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.

— *Shelley.*

19.—AFTER SUNSET.

The vast and solemn company of clouds
 Around the Sun's death, lit, incarnadined,
 Cool into ashy wan ; as Night enshrouds
 The level pasture, creeping up behind
 Through voiceless vales, o'er lawn and purpled hill 5
 And hazed mead, her mystery to fulfill.
 Cows low from far-off farms ; the loitering wind
 Sighs in the hedge, you hear it if you will,—
 Tho' all the wood, alive atop with wings
 Lifting and sinking through the leafy nooks, 10
 Seethes with the clamour of a thousand rooks.
 Now every sound at length is hush'd away.
 These few are sacred moments. One more Day
 Drops in the shadowy gulf of bygone things.

— *William Allingham.*

20.—HOME: IN WAR-TIME.

She turned the fair page with her fairer hand —
 More fair and frail than it was wont to be ;
 O'er each remember'd thing he loved to see
 She lingered, and as with a fairy's wand
 Enchanted it to order. Oft she fanned 5
 New notes into the sun ; and as a bee
 Sings through a brake of bells, so murmured she,
 And so her patient love did understand
 The reliquary room. Upon the sill
 She fed his favourite bird. “ Ah, Robin, sing ! 10
 He loves thee.” Then she touches a sweet string
 Of soft recall, and towards the Eastern hill
 Smiles all her soul—
for him who cannot hear
 The raven croaking at his carrion ear. 15

—*Sydney Dobell.*

21.—ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST.

In vain to me the smiling Mornings shine,
 And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire ;
 The birds in vain their amorous descant join ;
 Or cheerful fields resume their green attire ;
 These ears, alas ! for other notes repine, 5
 A different object do these eyes require ;
 My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
 And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
 Yet Morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men ; 10
 The fields to all their wonted tribute bear ;
 To warm their little loves the birds complain ;
 I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
 And weep the more because I weep in vain.

—*T. Gray.*

23.—SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

22.—REMEMBER.

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land ;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more, day by day, 5
You tell me of our future that you planned :
Only remember me ; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve ; 10
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

—Christina G. Rossetti.

23.—SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

XVII.

My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes
God set between His After and Before,
And strike up and strike off the general roar
Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats
In a serene air purely. Antidotes 5
Of medicated music, answering for
Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour
From thence into their ears. God's will devotes
Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on thine.
How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for most use ? 10
A hope, to sing by gladly ? or a fine
Sad memory, with thy songs to interfuse ?
A shade, in which to sing—of palm or pine ?
A grave, on which to rest from singing ? Choose.

—Elizabeth B. Browning.

27.—TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

26.—TO DELIA.

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the Sable night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born :
Relieve my languish and restore the light ;
With dark forgetting of my care, return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn 5
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth :
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease dreams, the images of day desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow ; 10
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

—*Samuel Daniel.*

27.—TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crown'd Fortune proud 5
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath : yet much remains
To conquer still ; Peace hath her victories 10
No less renowned than War : new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

—*Milton.*

28.—TO LADY FITZGERALD,

IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR.

Such age how beautiful! O Lady bright,
 Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
 By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind
 To something purer and more exquisite
 Than flesh and blood; whene'er thou meet'st my sight, 5
 When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,
 Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
 And head that droops because the soul is meek,
 Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare;
 That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb 10
 From desolation toward the genial prime;
 Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,
 And filling more and more with crystal light
 As pensive Evening deepens into night.

—Wordsworth.

29.—EJACULATION.

Glory to God! and to the Power who came
 In filial duty, clothed with love divine,
 That made this human tabernacle shine
 Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame;
 Or like the Alpine Mount that takes its name 5
 From roseate hues, far kenne'd at morn and even,
 In hours of peace, or when the storm is driven
 Along the nether region's rugged frame!
 Earth prompts—Heaven urges; let us seek the light,
 Studios of that pure intercourse begun 10
 When first our infant brows their lustre won;
 So, like the Mountain, may we grow more bright
 From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,
 At the approach of all-involving night.

—Wordsworth.



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